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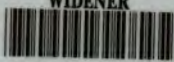
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FRITHIOF,

A NORWEGIAN STORY,

FROM THE

SWEDISH OF ESAIAS TEGNÉR.

BY

R. G. LATHAM, M.A.

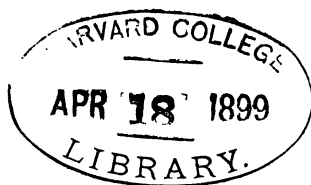
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THOSE who wish to pronounce the name of the heroine with becoming harmony are advised, that the *g* in Ingebore belongs to the first syllable, and that it is pronounced, not as in *got*, nor as in *gibbet*, but as in *king*. Ing-ebore is the lady's name, not In-gebore, nor Ing-gebore; still less In-jebore. Frithiof himself would never have known her by a name so un-Norwegian as the last.

PREFACE.

THE following Poem is a paraphrase, rather than a translation, of the most admired production of Esaias Tegnér, Bishop of Vexio, and Swedens most favoured minstrel. The scene is laid chiefly in the district of Sogne, on the south-west coast of Norway; and the events are supposed to have taken place in or about the eighth century. The incidents and characters are drawn from the two histories, or Sagas, of Frithiof, and of Thorsten Vikingsson.

I have called the work a paraphrase, rather than a translation. What part of it approaches most closely to the original I am unable to say; but, assuredly, the greatest liberty is taken with some lines in the eighth canto. That canto is in the original written

in blank verse. Those who have read the *Essay on Translated Verse* by Lord Roscommon, where, in the midst of a series of rhyming heroics, a paragraph in blank verse is inserted, well know how inharmonious is its mixture with the more lyrical measures; this consideration, combined with some natural fastidiousness in the matter of the Miltonic metre, induced me to render the meeting of Frithiof and Ingebore in rhyme. Now, in the Swedish, there is a certain part of that canto, where that quick kind of dramatic dialogue, consisting of a reciprocation of objections and rejoinders, in alternate sentences of one line each, a true *stikhomuthia* takes place. This, although admirably adapted for the Swedish, is in no degree suited to the English poem; so that in the latter the dialogue is omitted, and the matter of it only given in the lines beginning

“ Harsh and unkind, &c. &c.”

This is written by way of illustration, as an example of the license I have allowed myself.

The present is not the only appearance of Frithiof in an English dress. The Reverend Mr. Strong, after whom I should, assuredly, have never entered the field, had I not allowed myself greater latitude than that author chose to take, was the first who made his country familiar with the genius of Tegnér. A second translation soon followed, apparently the production of a variety of writers.

Since the commencement of my own version, a change has gone over the fortunes of the Scandinavian Muses. True it is, that they have sought Lavinian shores, and have been transplanted to the more hospitable clime of Britain. But the more honourable escort that they might (if Muses hope) have once hoped would conduct their emigration, they have lost. A bard, worthier of them than myself, was to have been my coadjutor in rendering Frithiof; whom, however, he deserted for severer studies, early indeed, but not entirely; since, in the forthcoming pages, several passages are more his than mine, and several entirely his own, *purpurei panni*, on a more ignoble texture.

IT IS THIS FRIEND,
E. S. CREASY, ESQ.,

OF

LINCOLN'S-INN,

TO WHOM,

WITH EVERY FEELING OF ADMIRATION,
AND REGARD,

The following Production

IS

Inscribed.

Cambridge, May 10, 1838.

I.

FRITHIOF AND INGEBORE.

IN Hildings hut, and Norways clime,
Grew two sweet plants, in perfect prime ;
And ne'er before were fairer given,
To smile on earth, or gaze at heaven.

There grew the sturdiest of them,
Like sapling oak with spear-shaped stem ;
Whose crest, as e'en a helmets, glancing
Wooed each wild wind to keep it dancing.

And one was like a rose, the day
That Christmas chills have pass'd away ;
And spring, within its burning bosom,
Dreams of its fast unfolding blossom.

When storms shall drive where winds may blow
The oak shall brave both wind and snow ;
But summers sun, and springtides shower,
Shall help to ope that roses flower.

I say, they grew towards flowers and fruit,
 And Frithiof was the sapling shoot ;
 And Ingebore the rose that vied it,
 The lovely rose that blushed beside it.

Who sees the pair while sunbeams shine,
 May deem himself ¹ in Freyas shrine ;
 Where urchin loves be deftly going
 With wings of light, and tresses flowing.

Who sees them with the pale moonlight,
 To lead their dancing steps aright,
 May deem there trips it, light and airy,
 The Elfin king, and queen of faery.

What Frithiof learned the day before,
 He taught the next to Ingebore ;
 And proud was he, when Beles daughter
 Had learned the letters Frithiof taught her.

If long and late they sat afloat,
 On dark blue sea, in open boat,
 It pleased as the sails were filling,
 To clap her hands, and help their swelling.

Oft as he clomb to steal her nests,
 From tops of trees or mountain crests,
 The ravished eagle screaming, clanging,
 Bewailed their nestlings airy hanging.

When floods were deep, and streams ran hoarse,
 He bore his tender charge across ;
 Pleased if the currents lashed around him,
 And her small arms the tightlier bound him.

When springtide came with springtides host,
 He plucked the flowers she loved the most ;
 The ears of corn that first turned yellow,
 And strawberries, as each grew mellow.

But childhoods hours fleet away,
 And then there comes, in later day,
 Those looks of fire that youths who sue have,
 And budding breasts, as maids they woo have.

Then Frithiof hunted, day by day,
 And brought the forest spoils away ;
 Yet few before had e'er attended,
 Such chase unscathed, and undefended.

For bears and he, in battle brunt,
 Oft hugg'd each other front to front ;
 The stripling won, and on the morrow
 Displayed their spoils to Ingeborow.

Yes ! heart of man, and female breast,
 Suit each to each, like helm and crest,
 When bravest hearts deserve the dearest,
 And strongest hands may win the fairest.

In winters evenings each gave heed,
 To runic rhymes they wont to read ;
 How gods had loved, and heroes striven,
 And how² Valhallas halls were heaven.

The locks o'er Freyas front of snow,
 May wave like corn when breezes blow ;
 One tress of one, he valued higher,
 Than all the vaunted curls of Freya.

Idunas rich and regal breast,
 May beat beneath her silken vest,
 And white it was ; yet scarcely vying
 With that which heaved at Frithiofs sighing.

Though Friggas eyelids, like the morn,
 Were blue as heaven to look upon,
 He knew of other eyes, whose brightness
 Might half mislead the mornings lightness.

And what if Gerdas cheeks could show,
 Like northern lights on drifted snow ;
 He knew cheeks whose faintest flushes,
 Bemock'd the burning sunsets blushes.

If³ Nannas heart was warm and true,
 Young Frithiof had a Nanna too ;
 If oldest bards had spoken duly,
 Bright Balder loved his Nanna truly.

O Balder ! could I die like thee,
 With one sweet maid to weep for me,
 Like thine own Nanna melancholy,
 I'd hie me down to hell unholy.

But she, the fair one, sat to see
 What songs might suit for tapestry,
 What hues of earth, or shades of ocean,
 With words in leaf, and waves in motion.

She changed her hand, and taught the woof,
 To show like brunt and battle proof,
 With silver bucklers, lances flying,
 Golden helms, and foemen dying.

In all her heroes all might trace
 Young Frithiofs familiar face ;
 As each true trait grew strong and stronger,
 She turn'd and blush'd, and wove the longer.

On birch-tree smooth, and aspen high,
 Did Frithiof carve an F and I,
 And watch them grow, and see them mingle,
 As youthful hearts that once were single.

When night was o'er, and day took birth,
 The bright hair'd day, to rouse the earth,
 And men were out, and nought was lonely,
 They thought about each other only.

When day was down, and night took birth,
 The dark-hair'd night, to still the earth,
 And stars were out, and all was lonely,
 They dream'd about each other only.

She pray'd the green hair'd earth, which spring
 Did deck with all its blossoming,
 To lead her feet to find the bower,
 Where flourish'd Frithiofs favourite flow'r.

And he besought the sea to show
 Its thousand pearls that lay below ;
 That he might choose for Ingebore
 The fairest ones, and string them for her.

Thought Ingebore yon golden sun,
 The eye of all it smileth on,
 With all its pride and all its bearing,
 Might make a shield for Frithiofs wearing.

Thought Frithiof if the moon were mine,
 The maiden moon that loves to shine,
 Its pale bright orb, would first be given
 To Ingebore, and next to heaven.

But Hilding chid him, " Foster son,
 " This early love is ill begun,
 " The chance of birth has left her laden
 " With pow'r and pride, a royal maiden.

" Her line," he said, " of high degree,
 " Ascends to Odins ancestry,
 " Unequal love is ill requited,
 " And like and like are best united."

" My line more lowly," Frithiof said,
 " Goes downward to the mighty dead ;
 " I slew the forest kings, and bound me,
 " Their hides and ancestry round me.

" The freeborn man is ill to yield—
 " Since all the world is freedom's field ;
 " Of what has chance of birth bereft me,
 " With best of birthrights, freedom, left me ?

" All strength has noble blood and more,
 " Its ancestry ascends to Thor,⁴
 " To lineage true, to boldness truer,
 " He holds the sword the safest wooer.

" I'll combat for my youthful bride,
 " With thunder and its gods beside ;
 " Wax fresh my flow'r, and fair as ever—
 " Woe to the hands that would us sever."

II.

KING BELE

AND

THORSTEN VIKINGSSON.



KING Bele stood in council-hall, he leaned him on
his glaive;
Beside him Thorsten Vikingsson, that yeoman bold
and brave;
His aged warrior-brother; a hundred years had he,
With scars like runes, and hoary hair, so silver
white to see.

They stood within the presence-hall, their looks
were haught and high,
Were like two ancient heathen shrines, that half
in ruins lie:
Along whose walls are carven lines of legendary lore,
And old heroic histories that speak to days of yore,

Then Bele king was first to speak, "My days are
 " well-nigh sped,
 " The sweetest mead is tasteless now, the helm
 " weighs down my head ;
 " But ever as each earthly bliss is fading into gloom,
 " Valhalla seems more bright and clear, I turn me
 " towards the tomb.

" And hither have I called my sons, and called me
 " also thine,
 " That each may hear in heedfulness, these latest
 " words of mine,
 " That I may speak, admonishing, before those
 " eagles young,
 " Ere voice and breath be lull'd asleep, upon this
 " falt'ring tongue."

So as that king had bidden them, they entered in
 the room ;

The first and foremost Helge came, a man of craft
 and gloom ;

He loved to live with priest and seer, and by their
 altars stand ;

He came from groves of sacrifice, and blood was on
 his hand.

And after him came Halfdan, a light-haired youth
 was he,
 His looks had come of noble blood, yet he look'd
 womanly ;
 It seemed as though the sword he wore, had but
 been donned in jest,
 He looked like maiden fair, disguised beneath a
 heros vest.

The last of all came Frithiof, he wore a garb of
 blue,
 Was taller, by a heads height, than the tallest of
 the two,
 He stood between the royal pair, as day, so calm
 and bright,
 May stand between the ruddy morn and dark dis-
 coloured night.

“ O children dear,” said Bele king, “ my sun is
 “ sinking fast,
 “ But keep ye true in unity, be brethren to the last ;
 “ For unity keeps fast and firm the kingdoms it
 “ hath bound,
 “ As lances points are best held on, by rings that
 “ lap around.

" Let valour stand before the state, and centinel its
 " door,
 " While peace may flourish inwardly, in sanctity
 " and store ;
 " Our swords were made for self-defence, and not
 " for injuries,
 " And bucklers broad may best be hung, as locks
 " on granaries.

" None presseth on his people but the vain and
 " foolish man ;
 " For rulers may but hope to do, e'en what their
 " subjects can ;
 " And sure I am, that greenest crests of tallest trees
 " do die,
 " As all their pith gets sapped away, and all their
 " bark grows dry.

" On pillars four, supporting it, the blue broad
 " heaven rests,
 " So thrones on earth are holden up, by govern-
 " ments behests ;
 " Where rapine sits as councillor, are pain and fear
 " and grief,
 " But righteousness exalts the land, and glorifies
 " the chief.

" The godheads great, O Helge king, in ^s Disarsala
 " dwell,
 " But not as snails or limpets do, in close and shut-
 " up shell ;
 " As far as days glad light may shine, as far as
 " sound may fly,
 " As far as thought may wing itself, are godheads
 " great and high.

" The wizard signs, in falcons lungs, may lead the
 " seer astray,
 " And runic staffs may fail to teach the best and
 " safest way ;
 " But heart of truth, and mood of might, and soul
 " devoid of fear,
 " Hath Odins self engraven deep, with runes both
 " bright and clear.

" Be not too stern, O Helge king, yet ready to
 " defend ;
 " The swords that be the best to bite, are aye the
 " best to bend :
 " A kindly king is like a shield with flow'ry wreaths
 " entwined,
 " And springs mild breath bring fairer buds than
 " winters chilling wind.

" A friendless man must fall full soon, all stalwart
 " though he be,
 " So peeling off protecting bark, will kill the tallest
 " tree ;
 " Befriended men are best to do, like lithe and
 " lively shoots,
 " With winds to wind beneath their leaves, and
 " brooks around their roots.

" Let no man boast his father's fame, the hero earns
 " his own ;
 " The arm that cannot span the bow, should leave
 " the bow alone ;
 " Why seek to deck thee with the wreaths that
 " lie within the grave ?
 " When streams are strong they cleave the sea,
 " with e'en their own good wave.

" O Halfdan, mark ! a joyful mind is e'en a joyful
 " thing ;
 " But levity befitteth no one, least of all a king ;
 " With hops and honey, each combined, the hy-
 " dromel is made,
 " Put greatness in thy sports, my son, and steel into
 " thy blade.

" The wisest men the world has seen, have rarely
 " known too much ;
 " Right little knows the foolish man, that knows
 " not he is such ;
 " The weak, vain man is held as nought, for all he
 " sit on high,
 " While wisdoms words from lowly seats are heard
 " most reverently.

" The man that seeks a foster-brother, seeks a
 " friend to greet,
 " Then longest roads are peacefulness, and all their
 " paths are sweet ;
 " To those who seek a foemans hearth, for all it
 " seemeth near,
 " The shortest road is bitterness, and all its paths
 " are fear.

" Nor tell your tale to every one that lends an
 " ear to thee ;
 " The empty house stands open wide, the full one
 " under key ;
 " Trust to a friend the secret thoughts, that in
 " thy bosom flow,
 " But tell thy tale to one beside, and all the world
 " may know."

Thereafter uprose Vikingsson—he spoke in manly
tone:—

“ It seemeth ill that Bele king must pass away
“ alone;

“ We twain have shared the chances of lifes ad-
“ venturous game,

“ And time is coming fast, when we may share our
“ death the same.

“ And length of days, son Frithiof, hath told a
“ tale to me,

“ And whispered many warnings, which now I give
“ to thee;

“ As Odins⁶ blackwing’d messengers descend
“ upon the tomb,

“ So on the lips of aged men there sits the surest
“ doom.

“ First hold the holy gods in awe, in awe for good
“ and ill,

“ Like storm and sunshine come of heaven, visiting
“ at will;

“ The eye of heaven sees the thoughts that dwell
“ within our mind,

“ And later days repay the sins of years that lie
“ behind.

" Obey the king ; who rules the land, can rule at
 " best alone ;
 " Dimvisaged night has many eyes, the bright blue
 " day but one ;
 " The boldest of the company, is captain of the
 " bold ;
 " The sword may need an edge to cut, yet needs a
 " hilt to hold.

" All strength of arm is heavens gift, it dwells by
 " Odins side ;
 " But strength of arm is helplessness, that wants
 " the wit to guide ;
 " The shaggy bear, with twelve mens strength, is
 " slain by only one ;
 " And shields there be to stop the sword, and laws
 " to stay the strong.

" Though pride may win the fear of some, it earns
 " the hate of all ;
 " Each haughty deed, son Frithiof, is father of a
 " fall ;
 " Who once have flown the loftiest, now lean upon
 " their crutch,
 " For fortune's smile is as the wind, it changes
 " overmuch.

“ And praise the day, that passes by, but when the
 “ sun is fled,
 “ And ale when it is drunken, advice when it has
 “ sped ;
 “ For lightest causes youthful friends will leave
 “ their mates afar ;
 “ Misfortune tries the comrade, as swords are tried
 “ in war.

“ Nor trust the ice but one night old, nor snow that
 “ falls in spring,
 “ Nor maiden seated on your knee, nor serpent
 “ slumbering ;
 “ For female hearts are fickle things, like wheels
 “ that know no rest,
 “ And most inconstant spirits dwell, beneath the
 “ whitest breast.

“ Thyself shall die, and all shall die, belonging
 “ unto thee,
 “ But one thing, mark me, Frithiof, shall live
 “ eternally—
 “ The judgement over dead men ; so strive both
 “ day and night,
 “ To think the thoughts of noble minds, and do the
 “ thing that’s right.”

So spoke the two old veterans, within the royal
 hall,
 As Scalds of old have spoken since in lays of⁷
 Havamal:
 From race to race descended deep, those sayings
 fraught with doom,
 And Norway still reveres the same, as voices from
 the tomb.

And after that they changed their speech, and
 dwelt in tender tone,
 Upon the truest friendship, that all Norways land
 had know n;
 In pleasure and misfortune, in calm and stormy
 weather,
 They held to each, through life and death, like
 clasped hands together.

“ With back to back, and heel to heel, we stood in
 “ battle field,
 “ That Norna,⁸ whence soe’er she came, should
 “ light upon a shield;
 “ And now go hence to pray the Gods, that when
 “ the sire is gone,
 “ Their guardian spirits still may brood, protective
 “ o’er the son.”

And much did aged Bele speak, of Frithiofs
 hardihood,
 That far outweigheth kingly pride, and Odins
 boasted blood ;
 And much his comrade spoke upon the splendour
 shining o'er
 The royal kings of Norway, the line of Asa-Thor.

“ Now only hold together fast, ye firm unconquered
 “ three,
 “ And foreign foe o’erpowering, shall never Norway
 “ see ;
 “ For strength of arm and kingly pride, indissol-
 “ ubly bound,
 “ Are like a good and golden targe with iron hoops
 “ around.

“ And greet from me my daughter fair,” the sinking
 “ Bele said,
 “ The rosebud blown in privacy, that these befit a
 “ maid ;
 “ Encircle her with safety, let neither storm nor
 “ shower,
 “ Attack in their ungentleness, that frail and fairy
 “ flower.

“ Thee, charge I most, King Helge, to stretch pro-
 “ tection o’er
 “ A fathers fond protection for thy sister Inge-
 “ bore ;
 “ Compulsion chills the noble heart, that strives
 “ the best it can,
 “ But gentleness directeth well the maiden and the
 “ man.

“ Now when our life is ended here, we hope our
 “ graves may be,
 “ Within the mounds that rise aloft, on either side
 “ the sea,
 “ For pleasantly its voice will sound, and pleasantly
 “ its surge
 “ Will soothe our spirits resting there, soft-singing,
 “ like a dirge.

“ When moonlight flaunts, with silent light, the
 “ shore she shines upon,
 “ We twain will sit at noon of night, upon our
 “ Bautastone,
 “ Aye seat us there, old Thorsten, within our
 “ shrouds so high,
 “ And gossip o’er the sleeping sea, of time that
 “ passes by.

- “ And now farewell, our noble sons, our last advice
“ is given,
“ We hasten hence Allfaderward, to sit within his
“ heaven,
“ As weary currents run to rest them in their ocean
“ beds;
“ But Thors and Freys and Odins blessing rest
“ upon your heads.”
-

III.

FRITHIOFS INHERITANCE.

THE warrior brothers slept within their grave,
Bele the king, and Vikingsson the brave:
Each where he chose his own sepulchral mound,
On beetling cliffs on either side the sound;
Two hearts in unity, that only death unbound.

Helge and Hafdan shared the throne, that day:
The people gave them each an equal sway;
And when the people choose, their kings obey.
But Frithiof took no partner, ruled alone,
And called the whole inheritance his own.
Round as a ring, o'er hill and dale and plain,
In three directions spread his wide domain;
'Twas six Norwegian miles from side to side:
The fourth was bounded by the ocean tide.
There, shining bright, on every hill-top stood,
Of smooth-skinned birch, a venerable wood,
And golden wheat and waving rye did grow,
Tall as their reapers, on the slopes below.

And, lying lower, countless crystal floods
 Spread out their mirrors to the o'er arching woods ;
 Athwart their allies moved, with stately pace,
 High-antlered elks, the sovereigns of the place ;
 They drank the thousand brooks that warbled there ;
 Flinging their coolness through the noontide air ;
 Vast herds of oxen in the woods were reared ;
 They bit their fill from its unshaven sward ;
 With dappled hides, and udders overstored. }
 Fleck'd where the grass was short, and shadeless deep,
 With milkwhite fleeces of uncounted sheep,
 Lying like clouds on heaven's azure floor :
 Themselves like fleeces when the storms are o'er.
 Twice twenty steeds in well aired stables lay,
 Stamped at the rack, and snorted o'er their hay,
 (The short sweet hay that, every August, was
 Shorn from their paddocks, prodigal of grass ;)
 With knots of scarlet in their braided manes,
 And shod with steel, insulting to the plains ;
 Fiery and fierce, their unabating pace
 Matched with the hurricanes, and well nigh won
 the race.

The drinking chamber, with its fir-tree wall,
 Seemed like a house, it was so broad and tall ;
 Roomy enow for twice three hundred men
 (For every hundred reckoning twelve times ten),
 To drink their Christmas ale, and make it ring }
 again.

Right in its middle ran an oaken board,
 Hard as a stone, and polished as a sword ;
 Each side the mirror at its end there stood,
 Two elmtree figures of the native wood,
 The ancient Odin, with his looks of might,
 And bright haired Freyer,⁹ bonneted with light.
 A bearskin, black, with yawning bloodred jaws,
 And sheaths of silver pendant on its paws,
 Was Thorstens seat ; amidst his friends sat he,
 Like wealth encompassed by jollity.
 At times that hero, when the day was done,
 Related perils that himself had run,
 In pilgrimages o'er the western sea,
 And, more unknown, the wilds of Muscovy.
 The list'ning audience hung on every word
 Like bees on buds, so reverently they heard ;
 And seers have said, that hoary man appeared,
 Like ancient Braga,¹⁰ with the silver beard,
 Recounting chronicles, none knew but he,
 With runic tongue, beneath the beechen tree,
 O'erhanging ever murm'ring Mimers well ;
 Himself a more experienced chronicle.
 The floor was polished bright, and strewn with
 haulm,
 And fir-tree faggots forced it to be warm.
 The roof was bored, the smoke ascended so ;
 The stars peeped through it, on the guests below.
 On nails of steel there hung, in ordered rows,
 Helmets and harness for the battles blows,

And slanted swords at intervals, with light
 Like that of meteors in a wintry night :
 And more than these, the shields of silver shone,
 Round as the moon, and gleamy like the sun.
 At equal distances a maid went round :
 The beakers that the champions drained, she
 crowned :
 With blushing burning cheeks, and eyes askance ;
 The shields reflected each inconstant glance ;
 The chieftains loved to watch that changeful }
 countenance.

Rich were the rooms, where'er you turned your eye,
 Was wealth, and larders stocked abundantly ;
 The treasures were in careful order stored,
 Purchased by peril, victories reward ;
 Gold with the coinage of a distant land,
 And silver chastened by the gravers hand.
 Of all the prizes that large house possest,
 Three things in dignity, surpast the rest.
 And first in place—a sword, in battle won,
 Descended far from ancient sire to son,
 Forged by some dwarf enchanter's artful hand,
 In Balders cradle, in the eastern land,
 Twin to the thunderbolt, was blue and bright,
 And swift to strike, and Augurvadel height.
 Biorn Bluetooth bore it first, that foiled in strife,
 Resigned it only, with his land and life.

Conquered by Vifell, no ignoble foe,
 On Aggers coast, where southern breezes blow :
 The victor Vifell, as his day went down,
 Grew old and weakly ; (Viking was his son)
 And lived in quiet by the sounding sea,
 With one fair daughter, loved exceedingly.
 Lo ! from the forests darkest dens there came,
 An eldritch monster of unearthly frame,
 Savage and strong, and more than mortal tall,
 To Vifells champions ; he defied them all,
 And vowed, uncombated, to seize upon
 The trembling maiden, and the forfeit crown.
 His brow was shaggy, and his scalp was bare,
 A ragged scalp, dishonoured of the hair.
 And yet nor stone, nor steel, could reach his brain ;
 Men called him, Ironhead ; it was so vain
 'To smite upon his scull ; it turned their swords
 again.

Viking, of only fifteen winters, dared
 Accept the challenge, full grown champions feared,
 Trusting in Augurvadel, and his right,
 And more than both combined his arm of might.
 A sudden stroke upon the giants side
 Cleft him in twain, and saved the fearful bride.
 So Viking girt the sword on Thorstens side,
 And Frithiof owned it when his father died.
 It flashed in answer to the notes of war,
 Like northern lights, or thunders harbinger.
 Golden its hilt, upon its blade there shone
 Strange runic letters, few might look upon,

None read ; save children of the solar flame
 In the strange deserts, whence the ¹¹ Asas came.
 Stilly and lambently those letters played,
 When quiet ruled the realm, and war was stayed,
 But soon as Hildur worked a realms unrest,
 Grew blood-emblazoned, like the gamecocks crest :
 Woe to the youth whose fated eye did meet
 Those blazing emblems in the battles heat ;
 But those who owned it, smiled, the more they saw
 Them glare and glisten, provident of war.

And next to this in place, nor less in price,
 A massy bracelets mystical device,
 Forged by the halting architect was there :
¹² Vaulunder wrought it, Norways Mulciber ;
 Wrought it of golden metal thrice assayed ;
 Biggest of the rings in bulk, three marks it weighed.
 On it the twelve immortal homes appear ;
 Meaning the months of the revolving year :
¹³ Alfheim is there ; the godheads call it so ;
 But Freyers dwelling is its name below.
 Where newborn suns, as every *Yule returns,
 Climb up, and heavenward, till the welkin burns ;
 And Soquebeck, where ancient Odin rules ;
 Saga and he upon their shining stools :
 He drains a golden cup of sparkling wine ;
 The golden cup is oceans azure brine :

• Christmas.

And she, the runic writer, is the spring ;
 Nature her book, and flowers her pencilling.
 Balder is seated on his throne of light :
 Type of the summer sun, at noon of night,
 That steeps the world in one unebbing flood
 Of soft sweet influence ; universal good :
 For good, is light, as suns that shine in spring,
 And evil, darkness, like the ravens wing.
 The sun and goodness toil to rise on high,
 And take their places in the vaulted sky :
 Till dazed and giddy at the steeps they gain,
 Sink with a sigh to Helas dim domain.
 Fast as they fall the seasons cease to smile,
 And heaven is black, and earth is sad the while—
 This means the blaze of Balders funeral pile. }
 The peaceful city was engraven there,
 With staid Forsete in the judgment chair,
 To guard the laws, and reconcile the land,
 Bearing a balance in his even hand ;
 These and their fellows, typifying lights,
 Toil in the human mind, and heavens heights,
 (How swift, and spirit-like, the sun goes forth
 To chase the darkness from the shrouded earth,
 And light in human bosoms, shineth o'er
 The dull recesses that were blind before ;)
 Were carven there—and for a hasp it bore
 A ruby, setting off the golden ore.
 This was an heirloom, but unlike the rest
 Came by the mother ; Vaulund owned it first ;

Much it was prized, yet for a time was lost,
 When Corsair Sote harried Norways coast ;
 Rumour at last, though slowly, spread abroad,
 That that bad thief with his illgotten hoard,
 Had built a barrow on some sea-worn shelf,
 Buried his barque, and his unholy self ;
 But that unquiet spirits dwelt therein,
 And haunted it, for all its former sin.
 Then Thorsten Vikingsson, and Bele brave,
 Hoisted their sails, and clove the western wave :
 Wide as temples vault the mound appeared,
 Big as a palace, half of turf upreared ;
 From out its chinks unsteady lightnings shone,
 They peeped between them, windows there were
 none ;

Beheld a pitchblack vessel, with a row
 Of oars and anchors, like its blasted prow ;
 Low in its poop there sat a grisly guest,
 Singed by the flames of his uneasy vest,
 Of savage shape : he seemed with vain essay,
 To cleanse a sword, to scour its stains away ;
 The gold, that luckless mariners had mist,
 Lay piled in heaps, the ring was on his wrist.
 " See him," said Bele, " let us both descend,
 " No shame for two to strive against a fiend ;"
 But Thorsten answered, half in angry tone,
 " Methinks our fathers struggled one with one,
 " So be it now : myself fights best alone." }
 Then grew a contest 'twixt that noble pair
 Who first should tempt his fate, and try the war ;

In Beles helmet equal lots were thrown,
 Each hero hoped he might shake out his own ;
 The stars that night shone clear enough to show,
 T'was Thorstens turn to fight the fiend below.
 Smit by his butt-end lance, asunder went,
 Bolt, beam, and bar, that closed the dark descent ;
 When younger warriors asked, what sights he saw,
 He spoke no word : he frowned them into awe :
 But Bele heard—at first a low and long,
 Uncertain murmur, like a wizards song ;
 Then sounds like those of swords that drink their fill ;
 Last, a distressful cry—and all was still.
 Up hurried Thorsten, weak, and wild, and wan,
 E'en as the image of a startled man ;
 For he had foughten death, and barely won :
 Yet held the ring, "'twas dearer bought," said he,
 " Than all the treasures of my armoury ;
 " I trembled once : 'twas when it came to me."

The last in rank, not least in value, came
 A wondrous bark, Ellida was her name.
 Viking, returning from a well-fought fray,
 Sailed by the shore and met a man half-way,
 Borne on a hulk, upon the ocean spray.
 Floating so carelessly, and so at ease,
 He seemed but sporting with the brine and breeze ;
 The strangers look was wonderful and wild,
 Tall as a man, and joyous as a child ;
 He wore a strange inconstant countenance,
 Like sunlit oceans when its billows dance ;

A golden belt, with corals interlaced,
 Girt the blue mantle wrapped around his waist ;
 His beard was hoary as the waves white foam,
 His locks as azure as the mermaids home :
 Viking took pity on his strange estate,
 And turned his sloop to where the wanderer sate,
 And took him to his home, and cherished there
 His frozen limbs, and dried his oozing hair :
 But when he bade him rest, and dressed the bed,
 He smiled in courtesy, and strangely said,
 " The wind is fair, the vessel clean and tight,
 " We sail a hundred leagues before to-night ;
 " Thanks for thy kindness, I would give to thee
 " A token, but my wealth is of the sea ;
 " Still may'st thou find, ere many days be o'er,
 " Some small remembrance on the neighbouring
 shore."

The Viking marvelled at the strangers tone,
 But sought the ocean with the morrows sun.
 Swift as an osprey darts upon his prey,
 A wondrous vessel seemed to sail his way ;
 It thrid its way, though there was none to steer,
 As if a guiding spirit kept it clear ;
 It tilted onward, till it reached the strand,
 Then furled its sails, untouched of human hand ;
 Slowly the anchor dragged its cable round,
 And taught its tooth to grapple with the ground ;
 The Viking paused, and viewed it wondering,
 The rippling waters were the first to sing,

“ Keep thou the ship, that sea-gods send to thee,
 “ In guerdon of thine hospitality.”

It was the wonder of the azure main,
 Its planks were oaken, of the midmost grain,
 Not joined with nails, nor soldered to, by art,
 But grown together, knit for naught to part ;
 A dragon's fiery form was carved below,
 Cleaving the waves, and serving for a prow ;
 With jaws to gape, beneath a scarlet crest,
 And gold resplendent on its blazing breast ;
 Its belly black, its coil was twisted round,
 It served for tiller, and its length was bound
 With golden glittering scales, and silver hoops }
 around,

Black were its pinions, made to tinge the air,
 But red like embers where there their corners were.
 Swell them with autumns most unruly wind,
 They matched the storm, and left the heron behind ;
 Charge them with warriors, you might seem to see
 Some floating fort, or sea-born battery.

All this and more was left as Frithiofs share :
 In Norways land there lived no wealthier heir :
 His sovereigns only were so rich as he ;
 For tithes and taxes puff out royalty.
 Was he no king, he had the better part,
 Of open hand, and unmisgiving heart ;
 Like his good father ; he had learned from thence
 Boldly to win, and freely to dispense.

Twelve swordsmen stout he kept of hoary hair,
 Whom Thorstens self had taught the trade of war ;
 With breasts of steel, to brave the battles blows,
 And scars, like wrinkles, on their hardened brows.
 And for a friend amidst such rude compeers,
 A youth the equal of himself in years,
 That looked in such a stricken company,
 Like bursting rosebud on a withered tree ;
 Joyous he seemed as an unartful maid,
 Bold as a man, and as a chieftain staid ;
 Was Frithiofs fosterbrother, Biorn his name,
 Their looks and sports and ages were the same ;
 Beside each other, in each fray, they stood,
 And as Norwegians use, had mixed their blood ;
 Sworn to each others help, whate'er betide,
 And to revenge the fate of him who died.

Amid the guests, who loved his father most,
 And meet to mourn him stood the heartsick host ;
 Drank, with the tear-drop standing in each eye,
 The accustomed cup to crown his memory,
 Then heard the minstrels of the hoary head,
 Thunder a Drapa* fit to wake the dead ;
 Sat in his fathers old ancestral chair ;
 I say that Frey and Odin guarded there :
 His place on earth, and Thors in upper air.

* Dirge.

IV.

FRITHIOF'S COURTSHIP.

THE sound of song, the guests among,
And praise of ancestry,
Are clanging all, in ¹⁴ Framness' hall,
As loudly as may be ;
But Frithiof hears, nor songs, nor seers,
A lonely man is he.

And earth is seen, in garb of green,
A lovely dress she weareth ;
And vessels brave, float o'er the wave,
That iceless ocean beareth :
Yet Thorstens son just views the moon,
A woeful look he weareth.

Though none might be, more blythe than he,
When Halfdan late had prayed him,
To come as guest, and join the feast,
Whereto the brothers bade him ;
For there was there, that sister fair,
The bride that Heaven had made him.

Aye he was bless'd, whene'er he prest,
 Her small slight hands that never
 But prest again, with some sweet strain ;
 He felt their pulses quiver,
 And fixed him on those eyes, that shone
 More beamingly than ever.

Much did they talk, in loneliest walk,
 Of childhoods early dawning,
 Whose white winged hours shed fairy flowers,
 Drenched with the dews of morning,
 Too frail to last, beneath the blast
 Of envious ages scorning.

She bade him hail, from hill to dale,
 From each fond scene she knew there ;
 From birchen rinds, of whitest kinds,
 Carved with their names so true there ;
 From oak trees old, in heroes mould,
 The holiest that grew there.

“ 'Twas sad,” she said, “ beneath the shade
 “ Of palaces to brood,
 “ With Halfdan trim, and Helge grim,
 “ That royal brotherhood ;
 “ Whose ears did fear one word to hear,
 “ Unless it prayed or sued.

" 'Twas sad," said she, " alone to be,
 " Without one friend to borrow
 " One look, to bless her loneliness,
 " Or wile away her sorrow ;
 " In Hildings glade 'twas sweet," she said,
 " To feel that aught felt for her."

Of all the doves, from Hildings groves,
 That she had kept so charily,
 The most had flown, to leave alone,
 A single pair so wearily ;
 " Take Frithiof, you, one of the two,
 " And keep it well and warily.

" The bird will roam, to seek his home,
 " And fly to find his mate ;
 " Then bind by stealth, some lines beneath
 " His wings and send him strait ;
 " Let no one see what lines they be,
 " But speed him soon or late."

So sat the pair, and whispered there,
 When morning first came on ;
 So sat the pair, and whispered there,
 When the brief day was done ;
 So April's breeze woos linden trees,
 To whisper to the sun.

When she was sped and fond heart bled,
 It was a mournful day ;
 He blushed, whene'er he felt that fair
 Fond lady was away ;
 And sighed so deep, he might not sleep
 By night, nor smile by day.

He writ his love, and bade the dove
 Herald it fast and strait ;
 Well did it know, which way to go,
 And well did guess the freight
 Of sighs it bore, returned no more ;
 It bode beside its mate.

'Twas sad, to see such youths as he
 So sad, it irked his fere ;
 And jolly Biorn asked, in his turn,
 " What ails our eagle here ?
 " Has spoilers sling unplumed his wing,
 " Or stayed his glad career ?

" What want ye, friend, that fears no end
 " Of yellow mead, and ale,
 " With stores of meat, to waste or eat,
 " And bacon by the tale,
 " And songs and seers, to sooth the ears
 " With verse, when wine may fail ?

" Each fiery steed would try his speed,
 " He stamps within his stall;
 " Each falcon fain, would strive to gain,
 " E'en highest Odins hall :
 " The lord of these is hard to please,
 " He mopes like baby small.

" There rolls a sea, both broad and free,
 " For that good sloop Ellida ;
 " She sleeps beside old oceans tide,
 " Though all his winds would speed her.
 " Sleep quietly ! she ne'er will see
 " Or hand or heart to lead her.

" No¹⁵ strawdeath e'er was heroes share,
 " Nor Odins old, who prest
 " His own broad brand, with savage hand,
 " Against his own broad breast,—
 " O but we shall go peacefully
 " To Helas place of rest."

Such taunting tried young Frithiofs pride,
 He slipped his vessel free ;
 The waters flew, the breezes blew,
 The blast that best might be ;
 Across the foam, to Helges home,
 He steered right lustily.

The royal pair held council there,
 They sat on Beles mound,
 Gave audience all to great and small,
 Dealt laws and judgment round ;
 When Frithiof spoke no sound outbroke—
 'Twas silence all around.

“ Chieftains,” he said, “ the royal maid
 “ Is very dear to me,
 “ And here I come, to claim her home,
 “ A lovely bride is she;
 “ On Beles laws I plead my cause,
 “ He wished such match to be.

“ Like sapling shoots, that mingle roots,
 “ And lace their boughs together,
 “ He joined us both, and trained our growth,
 “ In childhoods pleasant weather,
 “ When Freya twines with golden lines,
 “ Their lovely leaves together.

“ My father’s fate was small in state,
 “ Nor king nor earl was he ;
 “ Yet shines his name, and lives his fame,
 “ In Norways minstrelsy :
 “ Our oldest lays set forth the praise
 “ Of Frithiofs ancestry.

" Ye kings may ken, that stalwart men
 " Can win both gear and gold ;
 " But rather I will bide me by
 " My father's state of old ;
 " Defend the throne of Odins own,
 " Defend the peasants fold.

" I stand my ground, on Beles mound,
 " He hears each word I say ;
 " Though he lie deep in death's dull sleep,
 " He joins, as best he may,
 " In this my prayer, then think ye pair,
 " Upon the words I say."

Then Helge high, did make reply,
 His speech was full of scorn,
 " The royal maid," he sternly said,
 " Is not for bondsman born :
 " Great kings of pride, should woo that bride,
 " Not men that sovereigns scorn.

" Ye doubtless deem it much to seem
 " The foremost of the throng ;
 " Win over them with actions, men
 " And maidens, by the tongue ;
 " But Odins blood, may ill be wooed,
 " By serfs so bold and young.

“ When Helges land need Frithiofs hand,
 “ Himself will ask the loan ;
 “ No need, I trow, of that just now,
 “ His self can keep his own.
 “ But if ye’l be in livery,
 “ Fit place may soon be shewn.”

“ O dream not I,” said Frithiof high,
 “ Will serve such chiefs as thee,
 “ But keep the road my father trod,
 “ Like that good father free ;
 “ Come sword of mine, fly forth and shine,
 “ There’s worth no doubt in thee !”

It turned the gleam of Balders beam,
 It glinted in the air,
 O ! redly shone, those runes upon
 Its blade, so brown and bare ;
 A fool might guess that *there* there was
 Nobility to spare.

“ And if this mound were common ground,
 “ Nor Bele slept below,
 “ My angry mood, this sword so good,
 “ Had cleft thee at a blow ;
 “ And still shall teach some soberer speech,
 “ But less for spite than show.”

He spoke the word, he raised the sword,
At one blow cleft in twain
King Helges shield, that o'er the field,
Hung on a limetree ¹⁶ grain :
Half swung in air, and whistled there,
Half plumpt upon the plain.

“ Well cloven steel ! now rest and feel,
“ That kings have crouched before thee ;
“ And veil beneath thy silver sheathe,
“ The flame that flashes o'er thee—
“ Now bark of mine, ride o'er the brine,
“ So oft has broke before thee.”

V.

KING RING.

KING Ring was old, and stiff of limb,
Yet shot his stool from under him,
When bard and warrior rose to see,
What that good chiefs behest might be.

His land was as the gods own realm,
For peace and joy sat at the helm,
Nor weapon shone, nor battle boomed,
But grass grew green and roses bloomed.

His rule was mild, yet staid and strong,
That none might do, or suffer, wrong :
That peace might bid the land maintain,
His yearly rent of golden grain.

That whitewinged ships, with pitchblack breast,
Might ride athwart the wild waves crest,
And fill the land, at stated times,
With choicest gifts from farthest climes.

Yet freedom dwelt there ; not a man
 But loved the father of his clan ;
 Though every man, that there might be,
 Spoke at the council plain and free.

For thirty winters, aged Ring,
 Had been the father and the king ;
 For thirty winters, every one
 Had blessed him when the day was done.

I say, though old, and stiff of limb,
 He shot his stool from under him ;
 And that his council rose to see,
 What their good sovereigns will might be.

He said, “ My queen, beloved of all,
 “ Hath passed away to ¹⁷ Folkvangs hall,
 “ And, where she sleepeth, buds appear,
 “ And babbling brooks run swift and clear.

“ What ? though I ne’er may hope to see,
 “ A queen again so loved as she,
 “ My orphan infant ill can spare
 “ A foster-mothers tender care.

“ Now Bele king, that used each year,
 “ When summer came, to feast him here,
 “ Has left a maid with rosy cheek,
 “ And lily shape, that chieftains seek.

“ I know that age is slow to move
 “ The youthful mind, to dream of love ;
 “ That maidens eye finds more to see,
 “ In bursting bud than stunted tree.

“ Yet stalwart hand, and bosom true,
 “ May win the maids they choose to woo,
 “ If Beles child wed aged Ring,
 “ Then autumn gives its hand to spring.

“ So take ye garments rich and rare,
 “ And take ye gold, to spend and spare,
 “ And add the harp, to tell your tale,
 “ Since songs may win, though gifts may fail.”

They hied them off with mirth and glee,
 And gawds of gold and jollity,
 And shout, and song, a minstrel train,
 To Beles land, in Helges reign.

Three days they drank there, passing well,
 Of humming ale, and hydromel,
 And on the fourth, did ask to hear,
 What answer Helge bade them bear.

In darkest grove and greenest mead,
 King Helge offered hawk and steed,
 And bade both priest, and witch, reveal
 What best might work his sisters weal,

But steed, and hawk, in wood, and plain,
 And priest, and witch, were tasked in vain,
 And warned of heaven, Helge gave
 A cold denial, stern and staid.

But livelier Halfdan laughed, and said,
 " Your king should come to woo the maid,
 " Myself would help, in time of need,
 " King Grizzlebeard to mount his steed."

His taunting stung, the herald train
 Turned from the court with deep disdain,
 And told the pair that time was near,
 When Grizzlebeard should teach them fear.

His shield, that hung on linden tree,
 Was sounded for his championry,
 That came, in one tumultuous line,
 With ships to sail, and swords to shine.

Then beacon-fires flashed far and near,
 With fearful tales for Helges ear,
 Who, trusting most in help divine,
 Set Ingebore in Balder's shrine.

There sat the maid, and fain was she
 To cheer herself with tapestry ;
 Fairer than ought that grieves, unless
 Some lily weep for dewiness.

VI.

FRITHIOF PLAYS AT CHESS.

BIORN and Frithiof behold,
With a chequer'd board between ;
Half of silver, half of gold,
Were the chequers and the men.

Hilding entered, all in speed,
Frithiof sat him in his chair,
Bade him drink a horn of mead,
See the game and watch it there.

“ Beles sons and Beles land,
“ Waves of war do overwhelm,
“ And they bid me beg thy brand,
“ Brand and arm to help the realm.”

“ Check the king,” the warrior cries,
“ Biorn the game is well nigh drawn ;
“ Save him with the sacrifice
“ Of a little lowly pawn.”

" Sneer not so at kingly things,
 " Eagle broods have strength divine ;
 " Though their might be small to Rings,
 " It is giant-like to thine."

" Biorn would make his conquest sure,
 " Take my tower, I heed him not ;
 " Frithiofs castle sits secure,
 " In a well-protected spot."

" Ingebore, in Balders shrine,
 " Sits and weeps the live-long day ;
 " She can bend that soul of thine,
 " Say, what other plaintiff may ?"

" Would'st thou take my queen from me
 " Robb'd of what I prize the most ;
 " I shall save her manfully,
 " Whatsoe'er that saving cost ?"

Hilding said in bitterness,
 " Will the sullen foster-son,
 " Keep his father answerless,
 " Till a game of chess be done ?"

Suddenly the chief was stirr'd,
 Took that old man's hand in his ;
 " Foster-father, thou hast heard,
 " What the mind of Frithiof is.

- “ Say to Beles progeny,
“ Since his honour first was stain’d,
“ Injured Frithiof ne’er will be,
“ Liegeman as his sire remain’d.”
- “ Well ! I scarce can blame thy mood,
“ Carve your paths as best you may,
“ Odin make them strait and good !”
Hilding said, and turned away.
-

VII.

THE MEETING.

KING Beles sons, o'er hill and lea,
 May summon swords, they gain not mine ;
The only battle-field for me,
 The only world, is Balders shrine.
Though kings command, though nations weep,
 Thence will I turn me back no more ;
But drink of heavenly raptures deep,
 Together with my Ingebore.

What time the sunshine loves to rain
 Its purple light o'er earths green bowers,
Deep as thy scarf, of crimson grain,
 Itself a woven world of flowers ;
I wander on the lonely strand,
 Impatient as true love should be ;
'Trace with my sword upon the sand,
 The name of her I sigh to see.

How slow the lingering hours drag on !

Thou god of day, why loiterest thou ?

Say, hast thou never gazed upon

A hill, a strait, or isle, ere now ?

Say, in the chambers of the west,

Waits there no maiden fair to meet thee ?

And fondly flyeth to thy breast

Her first, her only love, to greet thee ?

At length o'erwearied, to the deep

Thou sinkest slowly from on high ;

And twilight draws around thy sleep

Her rosy curtain o'er the sky.

The streamlets murmur soft delight,

The breezes murmur sweet desire ;

Hail heavenly mother, welcome, night,

In bridal pearl-adorned attire.

The stars steal forth, as silently

As lovers seek the loved ones pillow ;

Fly, my **Ellida**, swiftly fly !

Shoot on, shoot on, thou dark-blue billow !

'Tis to a gracious power we steer,

Lo ! where his grove is rising fair :

Speed on, great Balders shrine is near,

And loves own goddess waits me there.

How joyously I tread the shore !
 I'll kiss thee blessed earth, and ye,
 Ye flowrets small, that cluster o'er
 My winding path, to welcome me.
 Sweet moon how placidly are gleaming
 Hill, shrine, and valley, in thy light ;
 How beautiful thou sittest, dreaming,
 Up in the bright blue heavens height.

Stream of the bud-embroidered vales,
 Why murmur like my souls unrest ?
 And why, enamoured nightingales,
 Steal your complaint from Frithiofs breast ?
 The Elfs paint with evening dyes
 The form my spirit seeks to see ;
 But Freya blows it from the skies,
 For that it is more fair than she.

Well may her breath the *form* remove ;
 'Tis her sweet self I see ; as fair
 As hope, as true as childhoods love,
 My life reward, my bride stands there.
 Come, best and dearest, let me press thee,
 Unto the heart that loves thee best ;
 Come, let my panting soul caress thee,
 Come to these arms, and be at rest.

Bright as a rose that scents the wind,
 Taper as lily stems is she ;
 Pure as Gefions ¹⁸ thoughts, and kind
 As Freyas self is deemed to be ;
 Rain on this brow, and on this cheek,
 The burning kisses of thy love,
 Kindled by thoughts too strong to speak,
 'Till earth swim round, and heaven above.

No need for fear ; why change thine hue ?
 Why vex thy breast with vain alarms ?
 Biorn stands without, with friends enow
 To strive against a world in arms.
 Would that it came, and I might fall,
 Fighting with only thou beside me ;
 Blythe would I enter Odins hall,
 With such Valkyria ¹⁹ to guide me.

Why whisper fears for Balders ire ?
 For Balders of the gentle breast,
 Affection is his souls desire,
 The sacrifice he loves the best.
 Light on his brow, and in his bosom
 Eternal truth, that smiles at sorrow ;
 He loved the maid, that wept to lose him,
 As Frithiof loves his Ingeborow.

There stands his form, as once he stood,
 His look with mildest mercy beaming ;
 Say, shall we offer that sweet God,
 A heart whose bliss is overteeming ?
 Then bend our kness before him, bend them ;
 Meet for the lord of light alone,
 Are breasts like thine and mine, that blend them
 Each, in a spirit like his own.

God of the kind calm look, protect us ;
 Whose love is more of heaven than earth ;
 Spirits of constant truth, direct us
 To those sweet realms that give it birth.
 Teach me to rise serenely, purely,
 Cleansed from each taint of sin beneath,
 With this pale maid, to walk securely
 Triumphant through the gates of death.

I hear unearthly sounds of war ;
 They shake Valhallas silver portal ;
 But Odin finds no Frithiof there ;
 He sits beside his own immortal.
 I see the blue-eyed maidens wreath
 The goblets with the foam of gold ;
 But Frithiof turns aside to breathe
 His tale of love, untaught, untold.

Where streams, that murmur to the breeze,
 Flow round some dark green promontory ;
 Our bower shall be, beneath those trees,
 Whose golden fruit is Vingolfs glory.
 And ere each eve o'er those sweet shades
 Sheds only light enough to break them,
 We'll turn to quit our lonely glades,
 Lest some stray God should rove to seek them.

Of every star that brightest blazes
 I'll twine a wreath for Ingebores head ;
 I'll dance, in many twinkling mazes,
 That pale white lily rosy-red.
 And when the festal dance we leave
 For kinder, calmer, scenes of heaven,
 Shall silver-bearded Braga weave
 A bridal song for every even.

Whence sweetly sings yon bird of night ?
 From Valhalls faery fields she chaunteth.
 Whence smiles yon moon so calm and bright ?
 From spheres for which my spirit panteth.
 The moon and bird, these midnight hours,
 Too full of love to dream of sorrow,
 Woo us to worlds, whose brightest bowers,
 Are thine and mine, my Ingeborow.

Start not, for that thy Frithiof call
 This earth a heaven ; his heart is moving,
 He breathes, he feels he lives, for all
 His sense-encharmed moonlit roving.
 Once to be folded on thy breast,
 Once to be greeted by thy smile,
 Recalls his thoughts, that know no rest,
 And make Valhallas glories vile.

“ The lark ²⁰ is singing,” No ! a dove
 But chaunts from out its sleepless breast ;
 The lark is yet beside its love ;
 It dreams upon its lowly nest.
 O happy birds ! with nought to tear ye
 From out your downy mates embrace ;
 Free as the sunny wings, that bear ye
 Across the deep blue vaults of space.

“ See day is dawning,” No ! there glows
 Some beacon in the eastern sky ;
 The envious night hath yet to close,
 And this sweet silent hour to die,
 Lie still, lie still, bright Balders beam ;
 Ye stars of morning sleep your fill ;
 Ere Frithiof wake ye, ye may dream
 Till Ragnarok, ²¹ if so ye will.

Alas, the seasons lovers seek !

The days unwelcome breath is blowing :
 And like the red of Ingebores cheek,
 The roses of the East are glowing :
 And jubilant to greet the dawning,
 Uncounted songsters fill the sky ;
 The waves grow bright—alas ! this morning
 Bids Frithiof hopes and heart to die.

See ! monarch-like he treads abroad ;
 The odorous earth, the liquid air,
 The aspiring soul confess the God :
 Spirit of light direct my prayer.
 To rise like thee in yon blue sky,
 As proud, as beautiful, as bright ;
 Pure as thy beam, and walk on high,
 In thy triumphal robe of light.

Here stands a fairer maid, than eye
 Like thine might deem the world could show ;
 Be thou her guardian, Deity !
 As she is thy sweet type below.
 Whose looks of light, whose eyes deep blue,
 Whose breast of chastened calm desire,
 But mocks thy heavens azure hue,
 Thy crowns own gold, thy rays pure fire,

Farewell, farewell ! again we meet,
Again we meet at set of sun ;
One kiss upon thy forehead, sweet,
Yet on thy lips another one.
Sleep now awhile, and dream of me,
Then wake the tedious hours to tell,
To think of me, to long for me
As I for thee—Farewell, Farewell.

VIII.

THE PARTING.

INGEBORE.

'Tis morn; the sun has summoned up the day,
In all its pride; and Frithiof stays away;
Yet hath the conclave, held on Beles mound,
Dismissed its thousands from that holy ground.
The place was chosen well; 'twas meet and fair,
His daughters fate should be decided there.
Much did it cost that child in tears, and sighs,
And sobs, and sorrow, Freyas sacrifice,
To move the stubborn bent of Frithiofs brain,
To yield allegiance to his chief again.
Aye man at best is hard, and fortified
In that false honour, as he names his pride;
And lightly recks of womanhoods distress,
Nor blights one hope, nor breaks one heart the less.
The hapless maiden, bound on that stern breast,
Is as the moss upon the mountains crest;
That barely keeps its hold there, frail and slight,
And feeds its weakness with the tears of night.

Yes, yesterday it was decreed—its sun
 Might set in sorrow for a maid undone.
 He comes not yet—the stars in yon blue deep,
 Each after each, have gazed themselves asleep;
 And died, in silence, in their vaults so wide,
 E'en as each hope in this chill bosom died.
 Aye—'tis a crime to hope, and vain to move
 Valhallas Gods to bless a sinful love;
 That dared display, in Balders sacred shrine,
 A human passion to eye divine:
 What is such passion in a Godheads eyes?
 E'en mortal love that mocks a Deitys.
 The powers above be too serene and staid,
 To weigh one wish of mortal-minded maid.
 But is it sin?—methinks it were most meet
 For kind calm Gods to look on things so sweet;
 On loves, as pure as Urdas bright-eyed stream,
 And blameless, as Gefions morning dream.
 The sun is slow to turn his eyes aside,
 From two true hearts that by each other bide;
 And starlit night, his widowed weary spouse,
 Smiles, as she listens to their plighted vows.
 Can aught be holy under heavens eyes,
 Yet sin and shame before a Deitys?
 Aye—I love Frithiof, and that love appears,
 With the first pictures of my earliest years—
 I know not when 'twas born, nor deem that store
 Of days can come to make it be no more.

It grew with me as fruits of choicest kinds,
 When summer sunbeams kiss their golden rinds,
 Grow round, and ripen in days bright gleam ;
 Knit to the cores, that are the hearts of them.
 I was a shell on some unvalued tree,
 Till Frithiofs spirit was as fruit to me.

Forgive me, Balder ; as a true tried maid,
 Entered thy temple when her brothers bade ;
 So shall these leave it, e'er this day be done,
 A true tried bosom, which that maid did own.
 Its love shall waft it o'er the boundless air,
 And set itself before the Godheads there ;
 Stand by their side, an Asa-son, and see
 How like itself its Asa-brethren be ;
 Gaze on its form on bucklers bright, and roam,
 On dove-like wings, o'er all its heavenly home,
 The nest it sprang from—wherefore hidest thou,
 In mists of morn that o'erdazzling brow,
 Balder ? within thy veins there runs a flood
 Of pure bright redness, all in Odins blood :
 So in mine own—what will ye friend with me ?
 I can not give nor love, nor loyalty ;
 If I could give them they were worthy thee.
 But life, and all that blesses those who live,
 And hope, and fortune, these be mine to give ;
 To cast away, as queens whose state is o'er,
 Can cast their crowns off, and be queens the more.

My doom is fixed ! lest Valhallas Gods should say,
 Then earthly kin is less resolved than they.
 I'll hie me on to meet my fate half-way,
 As men meet theirs upon the battle-day.

He comes ; a Frithiof, but an altered one ;
 So wild and white—alas ! 'tis done, 'tis done !
 My Norna too—bear soul against its weight—
 Welcome my Frithiof though thou comest so late—
 Our lot is cast, and all is over now—
 Yes, I can read on that blasted brow.

FRITHIOF.

Thou canst—stands it not there in lines of flame ?
 In blood-red lines, exile, and scorn, and shame ?

INGEBORE.

O calm thine heart, and tell thy story first ;
 My soul is steeled, and strung to hear the worst,

FRITHIOF.

I sought the council, on the stated day,
 Held on the barrow where our fathers lay ;
 And up its sides, and o'er its sloping fields,
 All Norways yeomen, shields embracing shields,
 Swords in their hands, encirclingly stood round :
 Ring over ring, up to the top they wound.
 There sat King Helge, on his judgment seat,
 Dark as a thunder-cloud, when tempests meet ;

A bad black bloodsman, with his looks of hate,
 For men to fear, and Gods to execrate.
 Beside him Halfdan, like a child at sport,
 Dandled his sword, for very want of thought.
 I rose, bespoke him, "Battle rears its helm,
 " And stamps its foot, to shake King Helges realm.
 " Give me thy sister ; I will lend mine hand,
 " To fight between the foeman and the land :
 " It may avail ye—let our quarrels end,
 " That Ingeborens brother may be Frithiofs friend.
 " Be just, my liege ; one act, in friendly part,
 " Protects thy crown, and spares thy sisters heart.
 " Here is my hand ; and Asa-Thor doth know,
 " 'Tis the last time 'twill e'er be proffered so."
 Then rose a shout in that tempestuous field,
 And every sword was dashed on every shield ;
 And that loud weapon-clang, and warrior-cry,
 Rent the red clouds, that heard it fearfully.
 " King, give him Ingebore," the warriors said,
 " The sharpest sword should win the fairest maid ;
 " Give him thy sister ;" after that appeared
 The aged Hilding with the silver beard—
 Our foster-father spoke ; whose every word,
 Laden with wisdom, fell like sound of sword ;
 And Halfdans self from off his regal chair,
 Did join the chieftains to the peoples prayer.
 But vain was Hildings wisdom, Halfdans art,
 To move the stony bent of Helges heart ;
 Whence prayer and eloquence recoiled, alike,
 As wandering sunbeams from the rocks they strike,

Black was his brow : there seemed engraven there,
A dead denial to all earthly prayer.

“ Valhallas royal blood,” he said with scorn,

“ Might match with Thorstons son, though bonds-
man born ;

“ But sacrilegious men, it seemeth me,

“ Should wed with maids of humbler ancestry.

“ Hast thou not, man, insulted holy piles,

“ And met my sister under Balders ailes ?

“ An impious meeting, when the god of day

“ Blushed at its hideousness, and turned away :

“ Say Yes or No ;” then rose a shout below,

And every warrior cried, “ say No, say No.”

“ Say it but once, we trust thy words alone,

“ And hold thee peer to any Asa-son.

“ Frithiof, say No,—and Ingebore is thine.”

“ My life,” I said, “ hangs on a word of mine ;

“ Yet fear not, King ; no hope or fear can be,

“ In earth or heaven, to wring one lie from me ;

“ I saw thy sister, under Balders dome,

“ Saw her when day was down, and evening come ;

“ But not in sacrilege or sin—unless

“ The simple meeting shook his holiness.”

I looked around me ; superstition

Had blanched each countenance, and tied each
tongue ;

(Those warriors cheeks, that just had looked so stout ;

Those freemens tongues, that spoke so boldly out ;)

Then shrank those yeomen that had loved me best,

And they that touched me, shunned me like a pest :

Helge had conquered—with a voice as deep
 As Valas²² was, when Odin broke her sleep,
 In that strange story of the pilgrim king ;
 He spoke to me ; his words were withering.
 “ Thy crime is heinous, and your king might bid
 “ Or death or exile, as his fathers did.
 “ But mercy seasons justice, I am mild
 “ Even as Balder, whom thy sins defiled.
 “ Far in the west there lies, on oceans plain,
 “ An island circle, Angantyr’s domain ;
 “ The Earl, who long as Beles life blood ran
 “ Paid him his tribute, as each year began ;
 “ But since that sovereign in the grave was laid,
 “ Withheld it all ; that now remains unpaid :
 “ Bring thou this tribute, and arrears to me—
 “ And take such task in place of penalty.
 “ The Earl,” he added sneeringly, “ is hard,
 “ And hugs the treasure that he loves to guard,
 “ As dragon Fafner brooded o’er his gear:
 “ But then a second Fafnersbane²³ is here !
 “ More manly act in this award of mine,
 “ Than wooing virgins in a godheads shrine.
 “ Return ere summer, so may all behold
 “ Thy great renown, and, specially, the gold ;
 “ Else art thou *Nidding, over Norways land,
 “ Whose life is forfeit to each freemans hand.”
 So spoke the King, the council was dissolved—

* Outlaw.

INGEBORE.

And tell me, what has Frithiof resolved?

FRITHIOF.

What men resolve who have nor hope nor choice,
And only listen to their honours voice:
This Frithiof does; though Angantyr may hide
His hateful treasure under Nastronds tide.
This day I part.

INGEBORE.

This day—and leave me here?

FRITHIOF.

No, not to leave thee; be my follower.

INGEBORE.

It may not, must not be.

FRITHIOF.

Prevent me not;
Thy vengeful brother hath, methinks, forgot
The favoring chance that mars his hostile end:
Earl Angantyr was Thorstens former friend;
And haply, for his memorys sake, may pay
The golden gifts for which I wend my way.
If not, there follows, whatsoe'er betide,
A stern strong advocate at Frithiofs side;
A stern strong advocate, with tongue of steel,
A cutting tongue, that makes the hardest feel.

So may I send the tribute I have won,
 And that perfidious embassy be done ;
 And the crowned hypocrite, who sought my life,
 Behold it rescued from his offer-knife.
 Then we, my Ingebore, may see unfurled,
 Ellidas pennons for some newknown world ;
 Such safe retreat, as southern islets give,
 Where banished men may breathe, and lovers live.
 This Norway is a vile unvalued thing,
 That quakes with fright before a priest-rid king,
 And as he bids it, tears away from me
 All my hearts hope, it loved so tenderly—
 Well ! Freya knows what my revenge shall be. }
 A serfs dull soul is tethered to the soil
 That give him birth, and finds his daily toil ;
 The sterner stronger spirits move, as free
 As the wild winds that sweep o'er land and sea ;
 Some cherished handful of their fathers tomb,
 Is all the land they need to make a home.
 Yes ! other suns as gorgeously may glow,
 As those that flicker o'er these fields of snow ;
 • And other heavens be, whose starry powers
 Watch their brightselves in clearer streamsthan ours,
 Through air as balmy, and from skies as blue ;
 And, haply, gaze on lovers half as true.
 In such delightful climes my sire had been,
 And told the wonders that himself had seen ;
 When snows lay deep, and winter-nights were long,
 And the red embers glare was warm and strong :

Of Grecias land, where every season smiles
 O'er the glad greensward of its sea-girt isles.
 There dwelt an ancient race, in those far seas,
 With shrines of marble for its Deities.
 Now all is desolate ; the grassy sod
 Has clad the pavement where the heroes trod,
 And wilding flowers, and trailing stems effaced,
 The runic writings that their sages traced ;
 The vinetree clammers up the temple walls ;
 Its clusters mock their carven capitals.
 Yet earth, as erst, affords her old supply
 Unwooded, unharassed, to her progeny.
 The unsown harvest, with its golden sheaves,
 The red round orange, shining through the leaves.
 The purple vintage, with its trailing stem,
 Full as thy lips, and ruby-red like them.
 There will we build us, in the land of bliss,
 A little Norway, lovelier than this ;
 Then teach the unforgotten bridal-song,
 To the cold shrines that have been dull so long ;
 There act our loves, before the approving eyes
 Of the revisiting divinities ;
 Please them with images of truth renewed,
 If not the first, the firmest they have viewed.
 When the late mariner shall rest his oar,
 And float his shallop by the silent shore,
 And through the heaven, redolent of love,
 Look from the billow to the cliffs above ;

Shall see before some unforgotten shrine,
 A fair fresh image, that he deems divine,
 (With yellow hair, wooed by each wind of heaven,
 And bright blue eyes, that mock'the lights of even ;)
 Shall deem he sees on those enchanted shores,
 The Aphrodite of his ancestors ;
 There shall there grow, beside that sainted sea,
 An elfin brood, our fairy family ;
 With cheeks, for sultrier suns to teach to glow,
 Like southern roses in our Norway snow.
 Alas ! that hearts in unison, should fear
 'To seize their fortune, when it stands so near ;
 When favoring stars, and Gods more kind than they,
 Point them their path, and lead them on their way.
 No need of heaven, where true love takes birth ;
 It builds a Vingolf for itself on earth.
 Come, hasten Ingebore ! each word we say,
 Steals us a moments happiness away.
 Hasten my bride ! Ellida spreads, to-night,
 Her dark-black eagle pinions, for our flight ;
 And every wind, that ruffles yon glad sea,
 Breathes from the land, and bids us to be free ;
 Hating its cold constraint, and hating more
 This king-bestridden arbitrary shore.

INGEBORE.

O Frithiof, Frithiof ! thou art blest indeed,
 'That follows none, thyself being born to lead ;

Flies where the billows roll, or breezes blow ;
 Strait as the pennon on Ellidas prow ;
 The tempest rages ; but thy heart keeps still,
 And steers athwart it, at its own free will.
 How different the wretched maidens state,
 With harshest Helge master of her fate ;
 That heedless if his victim writhe or sigh,
 Beholds it bleeding with unaltered eye.
 To sob, to sacrifice herself, to see
 Her helplessness is Beles daughters liberty.

FRITHIOF.

Thou hast been free as Norways freest maid,
 Since aged Bele in the tomb was laid.

INGEBORE.

No Frithiof ; Helge is my father still ;
 Bestows my hand dependent on his will,
 And teaches Beles orphan child to be
 Too proud to steal her bliss from secrecy.
 Thou seest yon lily, in the stream below,
 That sinks and rises as the waters flow ;
 Pale as my cheeks, and as bedewed as them,
 With beaded tears, that trickle down its stem ;
 The fishers keel, that swerves not for its sake,
 Heedless and helpless, if it bend or break,
 Severs the stalk, that there is none to save,
 But the unaiding spirits of the wave ;

Yet not to perish ; for the root still stands,
 Firm and unshaken, in the binding sands ;
 Hopes for some future springs returning hours,
 To deck it with its old familiar flowers,
 Lend it the odours, that shed before,
 Clothes with hues, the earliest it wore,
 Teach it to view its sister stars above,
 Itself the seaborne star the mermaids love.
 Say, had the root been torn in that sad hour,
 What were the fortune of that fated flower ?
 To perish ere its prime, to drift away
 A worthless weed over the oceans spray.
 Such is the wreck of that lost maidens mind,
 Who spurns the laws that bind her to her kind ;
 Shorn of her strength, her last protection gone,
 She braves the scornful world, or weeps alone.

Hear me my Frithiof ; ere last night was o'er,
 Sadder than any that gone before ;
 When thou, though vainly hoped for, wast away,
 And seemed as distant as the welcome day ;
 The silent thoughts that dwell within the brain,
 Children of night, reflections sable train,
 With ebon tresses, colour of the tomb,
 Cold as its marble, solemn as its gloom,
 Pressed on these eyeballs, unrestored by sleep,
 That burned so much, they wished in vain to weep ;
 And Balders form, that once had seemed so mild,
 Looked down, in anger, on his trembling child :

That night the die was cast—Now Ingebore stands
 A willing victim in her brothers hands.
 Yet better had it been, not to have heard
 Aught of those fairy scenes thy fancy reared ;
 Islets of peace, and love, too calm to lie
 In the wild waters²⁴ of our agony ;
 Unreal visions, very frail, though bright,
 Woven of wreathes of flowers, and evenings purple
 light.

Who knows their weakness ? an unseen control
 Crept on my spirit, and unset my soul ;
 Swift, as a recollected dream, appeared
 The lovely fabrics childhoods fancy reared,
 Clad in unsolid colours, not their own ;
 Kind as affections, sweet as loves, their tone ;
 Hark ! how their music-making voices ring !
 “ Sorrowing sister, hear how sweet we sing.”
 Away ! away ! soft-sounding though ye be,
 Away ye siren-songs of Memory !
 Weep for the Northern maid, that fate removes
 From the cold country that alone she loves ;
 Weep, that the kisses of the noonday sun,
 But scorch the snow-cold lips they fall upon.
 Mocked by the rosebuds of some southern dale,
 For that her breast is chill, her cheeks are pale ;
 Pitied by lips, that sneer for scorn the while
 For that her soul has long unlearned to smile ;
 Sobbing in solitude, and shrunk apart
 From the fierce maidens of the fiery heart ;

A soul like Ingebores, in climes like theirs,
 Sighs for, in vain, its old familiar stars ;
 Beacons that watch, from heavens azure steeps,
 Over the barrow where her father sleeps.
 And shame it were, for Frithiof to swerve
 From the dear land, that he is born to serve ;
 And stain his shield, that ne'er was recreant proved,
 Only because a luckless maiden loved ;
 And shame, if Angurvadel, Norways pride,
 Must hang, unheard of, by her champions side.
 Are not the days that pass so smoothly o'er,
 Each like his brother that has gone before,
 Bright but unchanging, like a tideless sea,
 That maidens love for their monotony,
 Hateful to men, and most of men to thee ?
 That better far, my Frithiof, loves to brave
 The stormy terrors of the ocean wave ;
 Teach the black bark, insulting to the main,
 To bound, like courser, on his native plain ;
 And play, with desperate dice, for life and death,
 With just a plank between the grave beneath.

Even though our sweet paradise might be
 Nothing to trust, a glad reality ;
 Firm as thou deemest it, as thou paintest it fair,
 Child, more of truth than hope, of earth than air :
 Still it were sloth, such as the warriors scorn,
 And grave of hero actions, yet unborn.

Woe to the chief, heir of Valhallas field,
 When his free spirit rusts with his bright shield.
 For not to northern maids those charms belong
 That rob the Scalds of one immortal song ;
 Teaching the chieftains softened soul to prize,
 More than his soldier fame, an artful maidens eyes :
 That quench his glories in their gorgeous morn,
 And ring their curfew, ere their noon be born.
 Be wise, be wise my Frithiof, let us try
 Who best submits to stern necessity,
 And from the wreck of hope, on lifes wild tide,
 Preserve our honour—all is lost beside.

* * * *

Harsh and unkind that hopeless speech appeared,
 That sterner Frithiof, half in anger, heard.
 Vexed, that a sleepless nights fantastic train,
 Had bred strange phantoms in a maidens brain ;
 Galled, that the voice of honour seemed to be
 Harsh as the summons of necessity ;
 Mad, that while breezes blew, and suns rode high,
 King Beles daughter was too proud to fly ;
 He cursed himself, for that he strove to move,
 So much of prudence, and so little love,
 Then from his lips those savage accents fell,
 “ Farewell, King Helges sister, fare thee well.”

INGEBORE.

O Frithiof, Frithiof, must we part us so ?
 Hast thou no kindlier look before we go,

No softer word, to soothe the souls unrest,
 Of that fond maiden that did love thee best ?
 Deemest thou I lie on roses, and can see
 My lifes whole hope departing, smilingly ?
 And lightly tear from an unbleeding heart,
 What grew with it, and never dwelt apart ?
 Thou wast with me my spirits morning-dream ;
 And whatsoever joyousest did seem,
 Was cold, and chill, and comfortless, unless
 'Twere as a reflex of thy nobleness.
 Let not the image, that was once so bright,
 Grow sad, and silent to my aching sight.
 All that I own on earth below was thine,
 And all I hoped for in Valhallas shrine ;
 The sacrifice of this sad hearts distress—
 O ! it might earn one word of gentleness.

I know thou lovest me, and that love begun,
 Ere the first days of childishness were done ;
 Roam, as it lists, o'er each remotest sea,
 That love undying still shall turn to me.
 It may be true, the still small voice of pain,
 Shrinks from the clanging of the warriors strain ;
 Flies with the winds that waft thee from the shore,
 And drowns itself when festive bowls run o'er :
 Still in the night-time, when the brooding mind
 Recounts the seasons it has left behind,
 Some faded phantom, some sad shade appears,
 Fraught with the memory of more blissful years ;

Silent it stands, the moonbeam mocks its stare,
 With pallid cheek, and ill-arranged hair—
 What may it be? even the lonely maid,
 That sits in sorrow under Balders shade :
 Despise it not, dejected though it be,
 But whisper some sweet speech of charity ;
 Which nights less angry winds may bring to me. }
 For me there needs no monument to say,
 That what I loved the best, is far away :
 The solemn temple, with all its marble halls,
 Speaks but of thee, and every look recalls ;
 The God own image, that should sternest be,
 Loses its angriness, to seem like thee ;
 In the blue billow, Ranas cold abode,
 I watch the depths, whereo'er thy vessel rode ;
 In the deep forest, wander forth, to see
 Our names encharactered on every tree :
 The Sagas say it is a deadly sign,
 If the rude bark o'ergrow the carven line.
 I ask the daylight, when it saw thee last ;
 I ask the night, and each keeps silence fast.
 The oceans self whose breezes bore thee hence,
 Sighs but in answer to my aching sense.
 At the red setting of the God of day,
 Sunk in the west, I breathe my soul that way.
 The ships of heaven, the clouds that lie so light,
 Bear my complaint, and overtake thy flight—
 So shall I sit within my lonely bower,
 In widowhood of heart, and weep each hour ;

With idle hand, whose listlessness may try,
 To weave some drooping flowers imperfectly.
 Till Spring shall come from o'er the western wave,
 And weave her fairer flowers on Ingbores grave.
 Else on my harp, that only sounds to sigh,
 Strive to awaken some sad melody ;
 And bid its melancholy murmurs flow,
 Soothing my sadness—as these tears do now.

FRITHIOF.

Thou conquerest, Beles daughter, smile again—
 Forgive my passion, it was but my pain ;
 That, for the moment, borrowed angers vest ;
 The hateful garment, that becomes it least.
 Thou art a Norna, Ingebore, to me,
 And teachest well what nobleness should be.
 Necessitys stern wisdom ne'er need find,
 A better pleader than in thy pure mind ;
 The lovely Vala, that has moved my soul
 To yield it to necessitys control.
 Yes ! I will yield, will tear myself to-day,
 From thee, from home, from all but hope away ;
 That hope shall follow o'er the western wave,
 That hope be buried only in my grave.
 Ere soon, the spring shall come, and Helge see,
 A stern unwelcome visitant in me ;
 When that perfidious errand shall be o'er,
 Returning with the spoil he sent me for.

Then in his council shall I take my stand,
 And not to beg, but to demand thine hand :
 I have a word for some in Helges band. }
 All Norway, not her king, our wedding-day,
 Shall make thee mine, and give my bride away.
 Farewell ! protect thee heavens kindest powers !
 Remember me, and hope for happier hours !
 And keep this ring, the token of our love,
 Stamped with the wonders of the skies above :
 There is a wonder greater than the rest ;
 A constant maiden with a guileless breast.
 How well thy wrist sets off its ruby hasp !
 So shine the glow-worms round the flowers they clasp.
 Farewell, my bride, forget the parting pain ;
 It shall be better when we meet again.

INGEBORG.—(*alone.*)

How glad, and free, and hopeful, heroes feel !
 Who set their causes on their swords of steel.
 Unhappy Frithiof ! Nornas yield not so,
 They smile at steel, and as it lists them, go.
 Yon open hero spirit scantily can
 Fathom the soul of that revengeful man.
 Falsely ye deem that Helge e'er can be
 Or friend, or countryman, or ought to thee ;
 That sooner far than yield his sisters hand,
 Would risk his fame, and crown, and life, and land ;

Would send his sister, last of Beles race,
To Odins home, or aged Rings embrace.
O my sad heart ! there is no hope in mine,
And much I marvel that it lives in thine.
Follow ye deities where he is gone !
I'll feed my sorrows for myself alone ;
Marking on this his bracelet every day
Of every month, that rolls itself away—
In six long moons shall Frithiof tread this shore ;
But not to find the hapless Ingebore.

IX.

INGEBORES LAMENT.

THE autumn hath a bitter breath,
And unreposing sea ;
Yet I would brave, both wind and wave,
So but abroad to be.

I watched his mast, that yester e'en,
Sank with the sinking sun ;
And blest were they, both sail and ray,
To go where he was gone.

Gently, gently, blow ye winds,
Over the billows blue ;
Shine burning bright, ye stars of night,
Yet shine serenely too.

The spring shall bring the wanderer home,
Across the foamy main,
But friend to greet, or maid to meet,
Shall sigh for him in vain.

The maiden that had welcomed him,
 Shall be both stark and still,
 Or only lie, for agony
 To visit her at will.

His trusty hawk is left behind,
 And welcome he shall be,
 To take his stand, on Ingebores hand,
 And owe his food to me.

Which I will weave, in arras work,
 Astart from off his glove,
 Astart so bold, with claws of gold,
 And silver wings above.

And Freya, in her widowhood,
 On falcon wings did roam,
 And wander forth, both east and north,
 To turn her Oder home.

Even if thou would lend me wings,
 Far sweeter it would be,
 To bide my hour, when deaths dark power,
 Bestowed its wings on me.

Then watch, the wave, thou hunter-bird,
 From off my shoulder here ;
 Thou long mayst bide, ere breeze or tide,
 Bring Frithiofs vessel near.

When I shall lie beneath the sward,
And he return again ;
Then tell him how I kept my vow,
And how I hoped in vain.

X.

FRITHIOF AT SEA.



BENT on ban and curse,
Helge sought the main ;
He raised the wizard verse,
The fiend-invoking strain.

See, the ends of heaven darken !
Thunder roars from pole to pole ;
See the crested breakers ! hearken
How they chafe, and how they roll !
Lightnings in the clouds are tracing ;
Here and there, a bloody streak ;
All the sea-birds, homeward chasing,
On the shore a shelter seek.

“ Rough the weather, brother !
“ I hear the tempests pinions
“ Flapping in the distance ;
“ But we will not blench.

" In the lone grove sitting,
 " Think upon thy lover ;
 " Beauteous in thy sorrow,
 " Beauteous Ingebore."

Now a fiendish pair,
 'Gainst Ellida glide ;
 Wind-cold Ham was there,
 There was snowy Heid.

Lo the storm its wings unfurling,
 Dips them headlong in the deep ;
 Then the wild tornado whirling,
 Swings them up to Heavens steep.
 Things to shriek at, upward striding
 From the unfathomable graves
 That around them yawn, come riding
 High upon the yeasty waves.

" Fairer was the voyage,
 " Out beneath the moonshine,
 " O'er the glassy waters,
 " Seeking Balders grove ;
 " Warmer than it here is,
 " Ingebore embraces ;
 " Whiter than the sea-foam,
 " Swelled that maidens breast."

Now mid breakers see,
 Solundars isle appear !
 'Tis smooth beneath its lee ;
 Thither to haven steer !

But the dauntless sea-king standing,
 On his true oak holds his way,
 And the helm himself commanding
 Joys to mark the wild winds play.
 Tight he hauls the sheet ; swift, swifter
 Cuts the galley through the sea,
 And whatever billows lift her,
 Westward flieth, fast and free.

“ Yet it is my pleasure,
 “ With the storm to struggle ;
 “ Well are storm and Northman
 “ Matched upon the sea.
 “ Ingebore would crimson,
 “ Shamed if her sea-eagle,
 “ Fled with flagging pinions,
 “ Frightened at a squall.”

Now the black gulph opes,
 Now the swoln wave streams ;
 There is creaking in the ropes,
 There's cracking in the beams.

That good-timbered ship Ellida,
 Though the maddening waters pour,
 O'er their tumbling tops can speed her,
 Careless of their threatening roar.
 Like a star through twilight vapor,
 Onward shoots the vessel brave;
 And as mountain wild goats caper,
 Bounds along from wave to wave.

“ Better ’twas to kiss
 “ My bride in Balders shrine,
 “ Than stand here, and smack,
 “ The sea-spray spiriting up.
 “ Better ’twas to clasp
 “ Ingeborows waist,
 “ Than stand here, and gripe
 “ Hard hold of the helm.”

With bitter biting cold,
 The sky snows down its stores;
 'Gainst deck and armour rolled,
 The clattering hail-storm pours.

Ebon night enshrouds the ocean,
 Sky above and bark beneath;
 Sightless is that waves commotion
 As the sleeping-vaults of death.

Fiend-bestridden gulphs pursuing,
 Ashy white each cloven crown,
 Yawn unfathomable ruin,
 Seek to suck the wanderer down.

“ Rana spreads her pillows
 “ Blue enough to sleep on ;
 “ Ingeborows pillows
 “ Frithiof loves the best.
 “ Best of Norways seamen,
 “ Hoist Ellidas pennons ;
 “ Best of barks, Ellida,
 “ Bear us yet awhile.”

A white wave booms
 On the black ships floor ;
 Ere ye cried *It comes*,
 It had swept it o'er.

See, the careful chief is taking
 Off his wrist a golden ring,
 Bright as when the morn is breaking ;
 'Twas the gift of Bele king.
 Hopes for better winds to speed her ;
 Clips it into pieces small ;
 Twelve good seamen manned Ellida ;
 Frithiof gave a piece to all.

" Gold is good to carry
 " When we go to sea ;
 " Few go empty handed
 " To the sea-blue Ran.
 " Cold she is for kissing,
 " Fickle for embracing ;
 " Yet with gifts of gold
 " Men may tie her down."

With double fury flung,
 The storm fills in amain ;
 See, the yard is sprung,
 The sheet is snapped in twain.

And against the half-buried vessel,
 How the waves to boarding go ;
 Vain against the deep they wrestle ;
 As they bale, the seas o'erflow.
 Frithiofs self can doubt no longer
 But that he hath death on board ;
 Higher than the storm, and stronger,
 Still his firm command is heard.

" Here, Biorn, to the rudder
 " Gripe with might and bear-grasp ;
 " Such infuriate weather
 " Heaven never sent.

“ There is witchcraft stirring,
 “ Helge craven-hearted
 “ Spell-enthalls the waters ;
 “ I will up and see.”

As a marten hies
 Up a beechen tree,
 To the shrouds he flies,
 And he views the sea.

Like a loosened isle in motion
 'Neath her bows he sees a whale ;
 On it, o'er the foaming ocean
 Two grim water-demons sail.
 Heid, with crusted snow-flakes wrapping
 Round him, like the grisly bear :
 Ham, with stormy pinions flapping
 Like an eagle of the air.

“ Now Ellida, shew me
 “ If heroic courage
 “ Dwell within thy bosom,
 “ Trusty heart of oak.
 “ Hear me, noble galley !
 “ Art thou heavens daughter ?
 “ Up, with keel of copper
 “ Cleave yon wild wierd whale.”

And Ellida true
 To her lords behest ;
 With a spring she flew
 On the demon beast.

See ! a bloody spout out-pouring
 Streaks the frightened sky with red ;
 Bored, and pierced that whale goes roaring
 Downwards towards its oozy bed.
 Strait two sturdy lances loose them,
 Whistle from the chieftains chest,
 Through that shaggy ice-bears bosom,
 Through that pitchblack stormbirds breast.

“ Welldone brave Ellida !
 “ Not so soon will Helges
 “ Wizard, dragon galley,
 “ Quit its bloody tomb.
 “ Ham and Heid no longer
 “ Keep their course on ocean :
 “ Bitter is the biting
 “ Of the cold blue steel.”

And the tempest goes
 From the sea serene ;
 Though a groundswell shews
 That a storm has been.

Strait the ruddy sun advances
 Like a monarch in his pride ;
 Quickens with his lively glances
 Hill and valley, bark and tide.
 Ere he casts his look o'er them,
 Rugged rocks, and trembling trees—
 What are those green isles before them?
 Caledonias Orcades.

“ So have Ingeborows
 “ Soft and sweet entreaties,
 “ Flown towards Valhalla ;
 “ Dove-eyed maids of prayer.
 “ Tears from light-blue eyelids,
 “ Sighs from swansdown bosoms,
 “ Touch the Asas spirit.
 “ Thank those sighs and tears.”

But Ellidas prow
 That the whales chine staved,
 Goes lopsided now—
 Yet the storm is braved.

Still more weary are the seamen
 On that shattered vessels boards ;
 Pale and panting, weak as women,
 Bent, to rest them, on their swords.

Biorn takes two on either shoulder,
Bosom deep he gains the strand ;
Frithiof four, and taller, bolder,
Safely brings his eight to land.

“ Blench not, white-cheeked seamen ;
“ Waves are wilful Vikings,
“ Hard it is to strive with
“ Oceans green-haired maids.
“ See there comes the mead horn,
“ Gleaming, golden-footed !
“ Warm our frozen bodies,
“ Health to Ingebore.”

XI.

FRITHIOF AND ANGANTYR.

'Twas when the sun was sinking,
So like a swan of gold,
That all his men were drinking,
With Angantyr the bold ;
Their beards were all in motion,
Their halls were all of pine,
They looked upon the ocean,
And watched its foamy brine.

And Halvar, old and hoary,
Stood by the portals pale ;
He shared the heroes glory,
And served the heroes ale :
A slow and solemn speaker ;
A swordsman stern and stout ;
That only filled his beaker ;
And only drank it out.

But now did send it sliding
 Along the floor, and cried ;
 “ I spy a vessel, riding
 “ In trouble, on the tide :
 “ Its men be weak and weary,
 “ Their days are well-nigh oer ;
 “ Though two big giants carry
 “ Their drooping hulks ashore.”

The Earl looked o'er the ocean,
 So mirrorlike and clear ;
 Saw brine and bark in motion,
 Her steersman standing near :
 He tells him by his bearing,
 And by his looks so free ;
 No man, of Norways rearing,
 Was herolike as he.

From round the drinking-table,
 The Berserk ²⁵ Atle broke ;
 His beard was shagged and sable,
 He thundered as he spoke :
 “ Now try we what was vaunted,
 “ About this doughty foe ;
 “ That Frithiof ne'er was daunted,
 “ Betide him weal or woe.”

Upsterte, at Atles starting,
 Twelve sea-kings big as he ;
 They scared the winds at parting,
 They slashed their swords so free :
 The ship lay weak and weary,
 Her crew sat on the strand ;
 Yet Frithiof kept him cheery,
 And cheered his drooping band.

“ O lightly might I slay thee ;”
 Did savage Atle cry ;
 “ Yet thou canst choose, and stay thee
 “ To fight, or turn to fly ;
 “ But own thy spirits quelling,
 “ And, churlish though I be,
 “ I’ll lead thee to our dwelling,
 “ To join our revelry.”

“ Small strength have I for brattle ;”
 Was Frithiofs weary word,
 “ Yet ere I blench the battle,
 “ I’ll try my trusty sword.”
 Then flashed their shields so brazen,
 And shone their swords so blue,
 And Angurvadels blazon,
 Grew redder to the view.

Now stabs are dealt and driven,
 And death-blows hailed amain,
 Now two stout strokes have riven
 Each buckler into twain :
 Each holds him on his fighting,
 Each keeps his footing fast,
 But Frithiofs blade was biting,
 As helpless Atles brast*.

The chief bespoke his foeman,
 " Now change our form of war ;
 " For heroes steel smites no man
 " Who bears unequal gear."
 Then tugged the two together,
 Hark ! how their breast-plates sing ;
 So waves, in wintry weather,
 So helms on anvils ring.

As eagles o'er an ocean,
 As bears on bergs of snow,
 They sprung with measured motion,
 They rocked them to and fro :
 Deep-rooted rocks had quivered,
 To such unearthly blows,
 And iron oaks been shivered,
 By lighter strokes than those.

* Broken.

" Dreadful furies, that their chains have brast."

SPENSER. (See *Johnson's Dictionary*.)

Cold sweat is plashing o'er them,
 Their breasts are beating slow,
 The sands and shelves, before them,
 Flash fire at every blow :
 Their fellows stand, in fear of
 The upshot of the fray :
 The child unborn shall hear of
 The wrestling of that day.

And Atle first fell under,
 Fell on the cold earths breast ;
 The conqueror spoke in thunder ;
 His knee on Atles chest.
 “ It grieves me now that ever
 “ I flung the sword away ;
 “ Whose blade might serve to sever
 “ Thy Berserk throat this day.”

“ Lest such kind wish be blasted,”
 Was Atles proud reply ;
 “ Go, fetch it, whence thou cast it ;
 “ I'll keep me where I lie.
 “ For, be it joy or sorrow,
 “ We go the self-same way ;
 “ And thou mayest go to-morrow,
 “ Where Atle goes to-day.”

No need to teach the Viking,
 To close the dreadful game ;
 He fetched his sword for striking ;
 Yet Atle lay the same.
 Such hardihood came staying
 The heroes angry brand ;
 He held his arm from slaying,
 He took his foemans hand.

Now Halvar, interposing,
 Uphove his staff of white,
 And stopped the two from closing.
 In that unfriendly fight.
 “ Within be tankards, beaming
 “ With wine for warriors bold :
 “ And, though they now be steaming,
 “ The cates will soon be cold.”

Those foes, like friends agreeing,
 Then passed the chamber-door,
 With much for Frithiofs seeing
 He ne'er had seen before :
 No shapeless planks descended
 To form the naked wall ;
 But arras-work extended
 Like lining round the hall,

There cheered the cold Decembers,
A marble hearth, around
A stove, in place of embers
High heaped upon the ground.
There was nor soot nor cinders,
Upon the roof nor floor ;
And glass was in the windows,
And locks upon the door.

No slivered fir-wood burning,
Shone o'er each warriors head ;
But silver branches turning
In silver stands instead.
Two stout and sturdy pantlers
Bore in a larded hart,
With garlands round his antlers,
And legs stretched out to start.

A maid, with beauty beaming,
The chieftains side stood by ;
So looks a star forth-gleaming,
Behind a stormy sky.
Her dark brown locks were flowing,
Her eyes were bright and blue ;
Her little lips were glowing
Like roses steeped in dew.

The chieftains self reclining
 Upon a carven chair,
 His golden helmet shining
 As though the sun were there.
 His mantle all bespangled
 With stars of silver sheen,
 Its purple border tangled
 With furs of ermine.

Bespoke the noble ranger ;
 And stepped three steps to meet ;
 “ Be welcome here, Sir Stranger,
 “ And sit thee next my seat ;
 “ The world has heard thy fame, as
 “ It heard thy sires of yore ;
 “ And thou shall sit the same, as
 “ Thy father sat before.”

He reached a beaker, brightening
 With wine from Sicily ;
 It flashed, like flash of lightning,
 It foamed like stormy sea.
 He hailed the old resemblance
 Of Thorsten come again ;
 And drank to his remembrance,
 Himself, and all his men.

**A Gaelic bard was singing,
 From Morvens mountain range ;
 His voice was sweet and ringing,
 His words were wild and strange ;
 In homelier Norman phrases,
 Another Scald begun
 To sing the fathers praises,
 For largess from the son.**

**And Angantyr enquired of
 His friends beyond the sea,
 And Frithiof spoke, desired of,
 As briefly as might be.
 He dealt his praise so duly,
 No hero could complain,
 Nor Saga speak more truly,
 Its old heroic strain.**

**When next he told, what followed
 Upon the ocean wave ;
 How Helges imps were swallowed
 Beneath that ocean grave ;
 The warriors heard and wondered,
 Their captain wondered too,
 And loud applauses thundered
 The praise, that was most due.**

But when he went detailing,
 In sadder slower strain,
 How Ingebore was wailing,
 How he had loved in vain :
 Then many maidens gasped,
 And many cheeks grew pale,
 And tender hands had clasped
 The youth that told the tale.

At last he spoke in earnest,
 And told his errand too ;
 Angantyr looked his sternest,
 Yet heard his errand through :
 “ My self, and all my commons,
 “ Will pay nor fine nor fee ;
 “ We heed not Beles summons,
 “ But drink his health will we.

“ I know not who his son is,
 “ Yet if he seek our land,
 “ We bid him come upon us,
 “ And buy it with the brand ;
 “ We fear not fire nor slaughter—
 “ Yet since thy sire was dear”—
 He beckoned to his daughter,
 That sat beside his chair.

The fairy figure bounded,
 From off her cushioned chair ;
 Her breast was full and rounded,
 Her waist was small and spare.
 Young Astrild lay, revealed in
 The eddies of her cheeks ;
 Like sleeping bee, concealed in
 The rosebud ere it breaks.

She left her bower, bringing
 A purse, herself had wove ;
 Where bucks of gold were springing
 Within a golden grove.
 A silver moon was shining,
 A sea with sails was there ;
 Of softest silk its lining,
 Its hasp of rubies rare.

She bore it to her sire,
 And laid it on his knee ;
 Who filled it high, and higher,
 With gold from oversea.
 “ Take this, thy welcomes token ;
 “ Canst use it as ye will ;
 “ And, now thy speech is spoken,
 “ Stay here the winter still.

“ Though boldness smiles at seasons,
“ Yet winter rages now ;
“ And Heid and Ham be reasons,
“ That make the breeze to blow.
“ Ellidas self may fail, in
“ Stemming the stormy main :
“ Where whales as big be sailing
“ As him she cleft in twain.”

So kept they up their joyance,
Till daylight streaked the east ;
But sorrow nor annoyance
Arose from out their feast.
The last and largest measure,
Was drained to Angantyr ;
And Frithiof kept his treasure,
Till springtide of the year.

XII.

THE RETURN.



BUT Spring arose, o'er land and main,
And the grassy sward grew green again ;
So he thanked his host, and bade Ellida
Turn her prow, and swiftest speed her.
Gladly left that swan of black,
Its silver wake in Ranas track ;
For western winds kept softly sighing
Nightingale-like, to the sails untying,
And *Agirs daughters, with veils of green,
Danced round the rudder, and shot between.
So sweet it is, when first thou steerest
From distant lands to the land that's dearest ;
And seest the first blue smoke uncurled ;
And memory wakens her childhood-world ;
And bubbling brooks run swift and swelling,
Beside the old ancestral dwelling ;
And maiden true on turret high,
Watches the ocean expectantly——

Six days he sails ; on the seventh morning
 A speck, a mist, a line is dawning
 In heavens horizon ; it waxes clear,
 Till rocks, and isles, and fields appear.
 'Tis Frithiofs land, with its promontory,
 And its waving woods, in their summer glory.
 He hears the voice of the brooks unrest,
 And sees the cliff with the marble breast ;
 The jutting crags, the shelves more lowly,
 The grassy lawns, and the islet holy,
 Where in summer-time, when the day was o'er,
 He had sat, so often, with Ingebore,
 He greets in turn—yet sadly sayeth ;
 “ She, that should meet me first, delayeth,
 “ Nor hastens to hail me ;—may be she
 “ Hath quitted Balders sanctuary,
 “ Where last I met her, fain to borrow
 “ The harp or woof, to wile her sorrow——”
 Then shot him down, and sat askant
 On Frithiofs shoulder, as was his wont,
 His hunter hawk, that, fast and faster,
 Flaps his wings to greet his master :
 Nothing tears him from his seat,
 Hooking on with yellow feet ;
 His crooked beak, keeps closely peering,
 As if it had ought for his masters hearing :
 None may say what he did so for——
 Perhaps he had tidings of Ingebore.

Gladlier Ellida bore her,
 As the well-known billow broke before her ;
 And her steersman thought, when he felt her speed,
 Of the hind that bounds on the grassy mead :
 He stood on her prow, and close and nearly
 Marked the shore he saw so clearly ;
 He rubbed his eyes, and laid his hand
 Over his forehead to see the strand.
 Strange and stranger it appeareth,
 Unfamiliar looks it weareth.
 And again he rubbed his eyes to see——
 Framness hall, where may it be ?
 Shrunken, blasted, cold, uncheery,
 Like crumbling bones in a cemetery,
 With dust, instead of the waving wood,
 Smouldering where the castle stood,
 Is his fathers dwelling, sunk in ashes
 That the spray of the angry ocean dashes.
 He saw the sight with a tearful eye,
 And thought on the ruins bitterly ;
 Gazing on each charry rafter,
 That had rung with his early infant laughter :
 He beareth the scene as best he can——
 Sudden leaped the shaggy Bran——
 Dewlapped hound ! how oft thou torest
 Baited bears in Framness forest,
 And now must bound o'er the lonely lea,
 And spring on your master impatiently.

And his milk-white steed with mane of brightness,
 Swan-like neck, and hoofs of lightness,
 That Frithiof had ridden many a mile,
 Left his paddock to gaze the while ;
 Came to meet the chief who led him,
 Neighed for bread from the hands that fed him ;
 Frithiof alas ! is a beggar too——
 He has nothing to give to his friends so true.

The fate of the banished man has found him,
 A shivered heritage around him ;
 Aged Hilding met him there
 His foster-father with silver hair ;
 Little then that hero wondered——

“ Absent eagles nests are plundered.
 “ A precious prince of the land is he,
 “ And he keeps his oaths right royally.
 “ God-adorer, human hater ;
 “ Murder the name of his ²⁷ Eriksgata——
 “ Such hurts me little, it vexes more——
 “ But tell me tidings of Ingebore.”

Hilding answered, “ I come bearing,
 “ Hateful news for Frithiofs hearing ;
 “ Soon as you parted, Ring came on,
 “ I counted the shields, there were five to one ;
 “ They met by Disarsalas water,
 “ That run the ruddier for their slaughter.
 “ King Halfdan deemed it sport and play,
 “ Yet he fought as a man on the battle day ;

" I held my beaten buckler o'er him,
 " As he wielded his maiden sword before him.
 " Half the morn was barely sped,
 " When the battle was lost, for King Helge fled ;
 " Little recked he of a heroes calling,
 " Lightly thought of a people falling ;
 " But fled, like a Nidding, from noon till night ;
 " Burned Framness hall as he passed, for spite.
 " Then the conqueror said, he would ravage the
 " land,
 " If it were not redeemed by his sisters hand.
 " There was parley enough on either side ;
 " But Ring took Ingebore home for a bride."

" Out upon woman !" Frithiof said ;
 " The earliest thought that the Tempter had,
 " Was a restless lie, and he sent it so
 " In a woman shape, to the world below ;
 " A blue-eyed lie, with witching wiles,
 " And tears of the fabulous crocodiles ;
 " A white-armed lie, surpassing fair,
 " Yet firm as ice, and staid as air ;
 " With never a thought, but that sin should be,
 " And speechless, save for perjury.
 " Yet Heaven knows she was dear to me,
 " As still she is, and shall ever be.
 " There was not a childish hope or fear,
 " That was not told in that maidens ear ;

- “ There was not a deed, in my boyhoods days,
 “ That was not done for that maidens praise.
 “ As double stems, from a single root,
 “ Have the same sweet flowers and golden fruit ;
 “ Till one, the tenderer of the twain,
 “ Dies by the breath of the hurricane ;
 “ And the other withers, for pain, to see
 “ Its sister smitten so blightingly.
 “ It is not for naught that I seem alone,
 “ For our joy was the same, and our sorrows one ;
 “ I *am* alone—Accusing *Var,
 “ That roamest to find where the false ones are ;
 “ Noting the oaths of perjured men,
 “ On a golden board, with a silver pen ;
 “ Cease : for never a register
 “ Has room for the vows that are broken here ;
 “ ’Tis a sin, and a shame, and a crime I know,
 “ That the trusty gold should be used so.
 “ The Scalds have a song about Balders love ;
 “ But it speaks to the truth of the Gods above ;
 “ For little enough could a bard have found,
 “ Had sought for his matter on earthly ground.
 “ Yet never falsehood spoke before
 “ In soft sweet voice of Ingebore ;
 “ Soft as a lily, shaken by
 “ The mildest breath of an April sky ;

• The Goddess of Oaths.

“ Sweet as the magic music flung
 “ From Braga, God of the silver tongue.
 “ Never again will I heave a sigh
 “ To the tender tones of our minstrelsy ;
 “ Never again believe the strain
 “ Of maiden true, that loved in vain.
 “ Be thou my pillow, oceans flood !
 “ Steeped to your lips with foemans blood ;
 “ Be thou my fellow, trusty glaive !
 “ That caters for the hungry grave,
 “ And sows the seed, that loves to lie,
 “ In charnel-house for granary.
 “ I may meet a king, with a golden crown—
 “ See if I stint to strike him down.
 “ I may meet some sense-enchanted youth,
 “ Who pins his faith on a maidens truth—
 “ I will slay him in mercy—never to be
 “ Deceived, betrayed, bemocked like me.”

“ Alack,” said Hilding, “ youthful blood,
 “ Must boil like the raging Malstrom flood ;
 “ And need at times, there is, I trow,
 “ For cooling it with ages snow.
 “ I say, that ye wrong the maiden true,
 “ And the foster-sister that grew with you .
 “ Blame if ye list the fate that fell
 “ On her heart, unchangeable,
 “ Sent from Heaven, swiftly sped,
 “ Like a thunderbolt on her helpless head.

“ Not a friend did reckoning keep,
 “ How the maiden learned to weep ;
 “ She was as sad, yet as still, that day,
 “ As Vidar who weeps in the minstrel lay.
 “ Only to me did she show the smart,
 “ That lay, like a knife, within her heart.
 “ Never an ear, but mine own, did hear,
 “ The still small voice of that maids despair ;
 “ Weeping, like a widowed dove,
 “ In a smiling southern grove.
 “ As a wounded waterbird,
 “ When its downy breast is gored,
 “ Dives to die, and takes away
 “ From the eye of garish day,
 “ Its bleeding bosom—oft she said,
 “ ‘ I am to the altar led,
 “ ‘ Fit and seemly offering,
 “ ‘ For the peace of Helge King.
 “ ‘ Well the snow-drop decks the head,
 “ ‘ Of the dedicated maid,
 “ ‘ Whilst there hangs its bells between
 “ ‘ Old-mans-beard and winter-green.
 “ ‘ Death were but a mild reprieve ;
 “ ‘ What if Balder bright receive,
 “ ‘ Slow repentance, tears alone,
 “ ‘ Blighted hope, and fortune flown,
 “ ‘ As an expiation ?
 “ ‘ Yet sad though the royal maiden be,
 “ ‘ She seeks not for sorrow, nor sympathy ;

“ ‘ Pity not the maidens state ;
 “ ‘ Beles daughter braves her fate ;
 “ ‘ Only greet, when all is o’er,
 “ ‘ Frithiof from Ingebore.’

“ That wedding morn rose fresh and fair,
 “ But the saddest in Hildings calendar,
 “ The white-robed maids, and crested men,
 “ Made a merry bridal train ;
 “ While slowly marched before the throng
 “ Grey-haired bards to sing the song.
 “ But the bride, that ought to smile,
 “ Sat on a coal-black steed the while,
 “ As a spirit sits upon
 “ A thundercloud, on a stormy morn ;
 “ Pale as one whose heart would break—
 “ I lifted her over, she was so weak,
 “ The holy temples threshold, where
 “ Solemnly she breathed a prayer,
 “ Half a prayer, and half a sigh,
 “ To the Goddess of maiden modesty ;
 “ But more to Balder—then there cried,
 “ Many a maid by that altars side,
 “ All for the sake of the mourning bride.
 “ Then her brother, stern and cold,
 “ First beheld that ring of gold,
 “ That you gave her, broken-hearted,
 “ In the temple, ere ye parted—
 “ Swift and savage, Helge tore it,
 “ From her wrenched wrist, and bore it,

}

“ Where a carven statue stood,
“ Image of the bright-haired God ;
“ Hung it there on Balders arm—
“ Then my frozen blood grew warm,
“ Then my good sword half out-leaped
“ From the scabbard where it slept,
“ Then had that sword, well applied,
“ Raised me to a regicide.
“ But Ingebore whispered, ‘ let it be
“ ‘ A brother might use me more tenderly.
“ ‘ Men must suffer ere they part—
“ ‘ Heaven judge of Helges heart.’ ”

“ Heaven,” said Frithiof, “ has judgments true ;
“ But I’ll have a voice in the judgment too—
“ Balders solemn summer feast,
“ Calls to his temple the sovereign priest,
“ The kingly murderer, that sold
“ His sisters hand for gear and gold—
“ Heavens judgments may be true ;
“ I’ll speak a word of judgment too.”

XIII.

THE MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL.

THE midnight sun sat on the height,
With blood-red circle beaming;
Half day, half night, a mingled light,
Half night, half day, is gleaming.

Holy hearths are blazing bright,
With ²⁸ Balders fires upon them—
Types of the sun—with his looks of light,
Ere Hoders pall sink on them.

See ! a line of grey-beards stands,
Watching the flame as it speeds it ;
Knives of flint in their skinny hands,
As they turn each billet that feeds it.

See the monarch crowned aright,
Those pale old men around him—
Hark ! clang of arms in the noon of night,
In the holy grove that bound him.

- " Biorn, by the temple-portal wait,
 " Let none pass out, or enter—
 " Man that dares to touch the gate,
 " Cleave from scull to centre."

Shrank the King, and shrank the crowd,
 At the well-known voice that sounded,
 Loud as a bursting autumn-cloud,
 As in fierce Frithiof bounded.

- " Here's the purse, thou badest me fetch,
 " From the isles of the western water ;
 " Take thy gold, then royal wretch !
 " We strike for each others slaughter.

- " Shoulder shieldless, bosom bare,
 " So shall our dues be reckoned—
 " The first good stroke is the monarchs share,
 " But the subject strikes the second.

- " Look not on the door, 'tis vain ;
 " In his hole the fox is taken ;
 " Think on Framness, think again
 " On thy fair-haired sister forsaken."

Not like tribute-payer, meek,
 Little awe restrained him,
 Frithiof threw on his sovereigns cheek,
 The purse that his sword had gained him.

Down he fell, that Asas friend,
 Swooning, unupbraiding,
 Bloodied, hurried towards his end,
 With never an Asa aiding.

“ Craven ! darest not take the purse,
 “ That thine own good vassal bears thee ;
 “ Braver king had fared worse ;
 “ Angurvadel spares thee.

“ Silence priests ! with your offer knives,
 “ Hearts that terror bursteth :
 “ Word or look may cost your lives ;
 “ Angurvadel thirsteth.

“ Gentle Balder ! bright-haired king,
 “ Sure it were dishonour,
 “ For wrist of thine to bear a ring,
 “ Stolen from its owner.

“ Nor that it should so be kept,
 “ Did Vaulunder forge it :
 “ Rapine seized it, maiden wept—
 “ Balder bright disgorge it.”

They were grown together well,
 Wrist, and ring that bound it ;
 Frithiof tugged, till the **image fell**
 In the **holy flames** around it.

Hark ! the sound of fire draws near,
 On the spars and roof entrenching :
 Biorn is as pale as death, for fear,
 Frithiof, for shame at his blenching.

“ Free the grey-beards, ope the door !
 “ No need for a guard before it.
 “ The shrine is afire ! pour water, pour
 “ The whole of the ocean o’er it.”

Link your hands from the fane to the sea,
 Down to Agirs daughters ;
 Spout upon it fast and free,
 The splashing, spattering waters.

Like the rain-God Frithiof sits,
 Calm, on a shaking rafter ;
 Points to the flame as it shifts by fits ;
 The stream comes hissing after.

Vain ! behold yon pitchblack band,
 How the forky lightning breaks it ;
 There is thawing gold on the bubbling sand,
 And the smolten silver streaks it.

The flames have startled a chanticleer,
 But he flew to thatch before them ;
 And wound his bugle-horn for fear,
 And flapped his red wings o’er them.

A western wind went up the sky ;
 But a northern blast o'erpowered it ;
 Balders grove was warm and dry ;
 Those hungry flames devoured it.

Hela ! none so pleased as she,
 At the voice of the fiends that called her :
 Blackens rock, and scorches tree ;
 Such are the flames of Balder !

Hark ! the crackling gnarled roots,
 As the voice of the flame approaches ;
 What are mortal labours fruits ?
 When Muspels power encroaches.

A tide of fire, a blood-red wave,
 With never a shore before it—
 The sea reflects a temples grave ;
 The morning sun weeps o'er it.

Alas ! that such lovely shrines should lie,
 And such lovely groves in ruin.
 Frithiof turns aside to sigh ;
 What have his hands been doing ?

XIV.

THE EXILE.

He sat within his ship apart,
The midnight sunshine shone,
Then storms were brooding o'er his heart,
And waves like oceans own.
His eye was turned aside, to see
The temple smoke so silently.

“ Fly up accusing messenger,
“ To Vallhalls halls so free ;
“ And bid the angry Godheads there
“ Wreak all their wrath on me ;
“ Fly and proclaim, in Frithiofs name,
“ Till all its vaults resound ;
“ That fane so bright, of Balder white,
“ Lies smoking on the ground ;
“ And that its wood, so fair and good,
“ All hallowed though it be,
“ Hath ta'en its turn, and learned to burn,
“ Like any humblest tree.

" His sacred solemn grove no less,
 " Is blazing in its helplessness,
 " Unheeded in its deep distress.
 " It hoped, no doubt, to rot away ;
 " The privilege of dull decay.
 " Tell Balder this, and tell it on,
 " Nor leave him till the tale be done ;
 " Such misty herald ought to be,
 " Fit for a misty Deity.

" King Helges kindliness should be
 " Bepraised, as is most due,
 " That banished me from his sweet self,
 " And from his kingdom too ;
 " Well, hie we on, as winds may blow,
 " Or wilder waters bear,
 " Nor stop nor stint, where'er we roam,
 " Though oceans end were there ;
 " Ellidas side shall learn to bide,
 " The spray, that splashes on her,
 " And not disdain to take the stain
 " Of drops of blood upon her ;
 " O, only she shall be my home,
 " And from the storm defend—
 " My only home—my earlier one,
 " Was burned by Balders friend.
 " My Norway, of the wide waste sea,
 " My second fatherland,

- “ My first, I ne’er may tread again,
 “ And ne’er behold its strand :
 “ My bride—albeit, her side be black,
 “ And black, like pitch, her prow—
 “ I might not trust that fairer one,
 “ With whiter breast and brow.
- “ Yes ! fit for freeman is the sea,
 “ That owns nor sway nor sovereignty ;
 “ Yet brooks the rule of rover good,
 “ That quakes not at its angriest mood,
 “ But loosens sail, and steers at will,
 “ When waves wash high, and winds sound shrill ;
 “ For much it irks him, not to see
 “ Those waves as fetterless as he ;
 “ Whose broad blue back, and crested brow,
 “ He cleaves with keel, like share of plough—
 “ Steel is the seed such farmers sow—
 “ The reddest rain best makes them grow,
 “ And yield, those husbandmen that roam,
 “ Glory and gold at harvest home.
 “ Such husbandman shall Frithiof be—
 “ O ! Ocean be thou kind to me !
- “ The fathers spirit haunteth
 “ The grove, beside the surge,
 “ The ocean surge that chaunteth
 “ A slow and solemn dirge :

" The sons shall be, where wilder waves
 " Uprear a deeper din,
 " And open wide their jawlike graves,
 " To suck the wanderer in :
 " Freest of things below, those waves shall be
 " The home that keeps, the tomb that covers me ! "

E'en as he sang, his trusty bark
 Unwillingly swam by
 The cliffs, beneath whose shade it had
 Floated so frequently ;
 That still keep guard on Norways coast,
 And rear their heads on high.

But craft and vengeance, subtle pair,
 Had waked themselves again,
 And Helge takes him to the sea,
 Ten vessels in his train ;
 Then cried the men that manned the fleet,
 " The king will surely die,
 " For but one stroke of Frithiofs hand
 " Will speed his soul on high ;
 " Spite of his boasted Odins blood,
 " The hardy king will die."

'Twas barely said, e'er powers unseen
 Had hooked on Helges fleet ;
 Then each black ship was sunk, like lead,
 And thrown at Ranas feet :

The kings great self, amidst the crew,
 Must swim as best it can ;
 He floats ashore, on half a mast,
 A wet and weary man :
 But Biorn, who saw the chiefs mishap,
 Laughed loudly at his need,
 And jeered that man of ancestry,
 And gloried in the deed
 That he had done, the night before,
 Nor thought it shame nor sin,
 To bore small holes, in each ship-side,
 That let the waves run in.
 “ Sure Rana wise will keep the prize,
 “ As she is wont to do,
 “ Yet much I rue, she took the crew,
 “ And not the captain too.”

King Helge stands beside the wave,
 That just was not King Helges grave,
 And took a steel-bow, strong and round,
 And bent it on the stony ground,
 And tugged at it with might and main—
 Nor stinted till it knapped in twain.

Then Frithiof took a sturdy lance,
 And poised it high in air,
 And said, “ my death-bird here should fly,
 “ If worthier foes were there ;

- “ Then might some craven chief lie low—
 “ But Frithiofs falcon good,
 “ Is slow to strike at recreant kings,
 “ And ill to drink their blood.
 “ His lance shall show on tablet-boards,
 “ Where hero actions shine,
 “ And not on gallows-trees, whose beams
 “ Are scored with names like thine ;
 “ Whose actions shame him on the land,
 “ And sink him on the sea—
 “ ’Tis rust that wears the warriors brand,
 “ Not craven kings like thee,
 “ Now see one stroke of Frithiofs hand,
 “ And learn one feat from me.”

He spoke, and took a fire-tree trunk,
 ’Twas cut in Guldbrands dale,
 ’Twas cut for mast of ammiral,
 That biggest ship should sail ;
 He took its fellow, rowed the bark,
 Yet he rowed quickly so ;
 No swords might flash like those strange oars,
 Nor shafts more sharply go ;
 Full easily did Helge see,
 That chief had learned to row.

Uprose the sun, and shore and sea
 Returned its cheerful glance ;

That wooed the wind to breath again,
 And wooed the wave to dance.
 Ellida bounded buoyantly
 Athwart the oceans foam ;
 Her captain sang in loneliness,
 Farewell mine own dear home.

O Norway, Norway,
 Brow of the earth !
 Thy breast rejects me,
 That gave me birth.
 Pride in thee maketh
 This sad heart swell.
 Mother of heroes—
 Fare thee well !

Eye of Valhalla !
 Orb of light !
 Sun that shinest,
 At noon of night !
 Stars ! as clear as
 Mimers own well,
 Or the heroes spirit—
 Fare ye well !

And Fames dwelling,
 Ye leafy glades !
 That Thor loveth
 For your dewy shades.

Familiar brooks !
 Whose fond waves tell
 A tale of youth—
 Fare ye well !

And ye, ancestral
 Tombs ! that lie,
 Where the deep wave smiles at
 The deeper sky.
 Where Saga weaveth
 Her mystic spell,
 While the lime-tree swingeth—
 Fare ye well !

Myself an outlaw,
 My name disgraced,
 My home a ruin,
 My heart a waste.
 Spirit of Ocean !
 Hear my appeal.
 But earth, and peace,
 Farewell ! Farewell !

XV.

VIKINGABALK.

Now he rode on the waves of the wide rolling sea,
and he forayed around like a hawk,
And he wrote for his warriors statutes and laws—
Must I sing you his ²⁹ Vikingabalk ?

“ Lie houseless ashore, and lie hammockless here,
“ put body and soul to the proof;
“ With the shield for thy bed, and thy sword in thy
“ hand, and the heavens own dome for a roof.

“ Thors short-shafted hammer is half a yard long,
“ and Freyers own sword but an ell;
“ 'Tis enough ; hast a heart ; grapple in with thy
“ foe, and a ³⁰ dagger will arm thee as well.

“ When the winds are abroad, and the waters afloat,
“ and it joys us to dance on the wave ;
“ Ye may tack not an inch, ye may reef not a sail,
“ though ye drive to the gates of the grave.

- “ Win women on shore : bring no maiden on board ;
 “ e’en Freyas own self would deceive ;
 “ The falsest of eddies are those on the cheek, and
 “ snares of their ringlets they weave.
- “ The Battle-God drinketh ; we grant a carouse, if
 “ Sobriety come in its train ;
 “ All scathless the drunkard can stagger on shore,
 “ but not on the breast of the main.
- “ The trader sails seaward ; protect him his ship ;
 “ claim custom for helm nor for hold ;
 “ He is slave of his earnings, we kings of the wave ;
 “ and our steel is as good as his gold.
- “ By dice and by lot, must our booty be shared ;
 “ be content with thy fate and thy fare ;
 “ The sea-kings ownself neither casteth nor draws ;
 “ the glory alone is his share.
- “ There is arming in haste, as a foeman appears,
 “ there is clashing of swords to thy fill ;
 “ If ye blench but a step, we can spare thee thine
 “ arm ; ’tis our law ; ye can leave if ye will.
- “ Be kind to the fallen, give quarter if sought : no
 “ weaponless man is thy foe ;
 “ Prayer is heavens own child ; hear the fallen ones
 “ prayer ; ’tis a Nidding that answers it, No.

" A wound is a gain; it exalteth its man, if it
 " stand on the breast or the brow ;
 " It must bleed, it must bleed till the morrow
 " appear, if ye list to the Vikingar vow."

And these were his laws, and his name, every day,
 grew great on the wide-rolling sea ;
 And his like was not found, on the face of the deep,
 nor the like of his championry.

But his self sits in sadness; he sits by the helm,
 and looks on the billows that move ;
 " Ye are deep, in your depths there is peace to be
 " found, but not on your bosoms above.

" Is the White-one enraged? he may gird on his
 " sword; and if Death be my fate, I can die ;
 " But he sitteth aloft, sends his influence here,
 " which darkens my heart and my eye."

Yet as peril approaches, his soul sallies out ; sallies
 out like the eagle from rest ;
 His voice is the thunder, he moves like the bolt,
 and his brow is as bright as his crest.

So he floated the victor, to victory still ; winning
 glory by sea and by land ;
 And islands and islets were left on the North ; he
 came to the Grecian strand.

And he gazed on the groves, as he rose from the
 wave, and he gazed on the shrines, on their crest;
 And Odin and Freya might guess what he thought;
 but the lovingest heart knows the best.

“ O here might I rest, as my father foretold, by
 “ the shrine on the shore of yon isle;

“ And she that I love might have rested with me;
 “ but she bideth afar all the while.

“ For sanctity dwells in each pillar of stone, and
 “ peace in the forests above;

“ O sings not each warbler the songs for a bride?
 “ each runnel the whispers of love?

“ And Ingebore dear, whom I love like the light,
 “ and would venture my life but to see,

“ Has clung to an Olding, with snows on his brow,
 “ and little she careth for me.

“ Three summers have fled, since I looked on the
 “ land, the dearest to me upon earth;

“ Stand the hills as of old, with their heads in the
 “ sky? is it green in the vale of my birth?

“ I planted a lime where my father is laid; does it
 “ grow on the sward where it grew?

“ Who nurses that sapling? O Earth, give it shade,
 “ and Heaven, thy kindest dew.

“ Why rob any further? why murder anew? why

“ sleep on a southerly sea?

“ I have honor to spare, and the rich ruddy gold

“ is drosslike, is hateful to me.

“ My flag flieth Northwards: the North is my home,

“ the North is the land that I love;

“ Now follow the winds as they teach us to go, and

“ the warning of Heaven above.”



XVI

FRITHIOF AND BIORN.



FRITHIOF.

BIORN, I am weary
Of sailing the sea ;
Ocean, so dreary
Is charmless to me ;
The fields I inherit,
The hills of my birth,
Beat for my spirit,
And call my soul forth.
His is a higher
And happier doom,
That dwells with his sire,
Or sleeps in his tomb ;
Biorn, I am weary
Of sailing the sea,
Ocean, so dreary,
Is charmless to me.

BIOEN.

No ! ocean annoyeth
 The craven and slave ;
 Freedom enjoyeth
 Herself on its wave ;
 The rovers best pillow
 Is Ranas blue foam ;
 Keep to the billow,
 And call it thy home.
 When age bids me do it,
 I'll cling to the earth ;
 As the grass clingeth to it,
 That owes it its birth :
 Now taste we each pleasure,
 That life can afford ;
 Fighting for treasure,
 And drinking aboard.

FRITHIOF.

The ice is around us,
 The wave is asleep ;
 The glacier has bound us,
 It chains up the deep ;
 The sea, and its surges,
 Sound sadly to me ;
 Singing their dirges,
 So piteously.

Ellida shall bear me,
 Across the blue tide ;
 And Ingebore hear me,
 Again by her side ;
 The sound of her voice is
 As sweet as of yore,
 And the maid of my choice is
 As dear as before.

BIORN.

I understand thee—
 Some chieftain shall find,
 The breezes that land thee,
 The least to his mind ;
 At our returning,
 His soldiers shall say :
 “ The palace was burning,
 “ The bride was away.”
 Deal we our blows on
 The land, or the sea ;
 The firth, that is frozen,
 The field, that is free ;
 Stint not at striking,
 Our foeman shall prove,
 That vengeance of Viking,
 Is not what they love.

FRITHIOF.

Dream not of slaughter,
 And talk not of war ;
 Beles fair daughter
 Is holier far ;
 One true heart is shattered,
 Yet blameless is she ;
 Heaven has scattered
 Its wrath upon me :
 Little to greet me
 Remains here on earth ;
 Save joy when she meet me,
 And tears when we part ;
 Part, and for ever—
 When Spring draweth near,
 And the aspen trees quiver ;
 May'st look for me here.

BIORN.

Angantyr's foeman
 Is sickly and weak,
 To talk of a woman,
 With tears on his cheek,

Though fairer than any—
 Women there be,
 A million too many,
 For mortals like me.
 Send me a cruising,
 I'll bring thee enow,
 Of dames, for our choosing,
 And choose for thee too;
 When they have seen us,
 And cheered up our soul,
 We'll part them between us,
 Or cast for the whole.

FRITHIOF.

Proud of the praise of
 Both Odin and Thor,
 And skilled in the ways of
 The wave and the war;
 Freyas o'erstealing,
 Balders controul,
 Have touched not thy feeling,
 Nor softened thy soul.
 When Balder smiles kindly
 Leave him at rest,
 And wake not too blindly
 The rage in his breast.

When vengeance is thirsting,
 Its angrier strain,
 May press, to their bursting,
 The heart and the brain.

BIOEN.

Go not so lonely,
 Thy ways may be barred ;

FRITHIOF.

My sword with me only,
 Suffices to guard.

BIOEN.

Hagbart o'ertaken
 Was hanged on a tree ;

FRITHIOF.

As folly forsaken
 Is fittest to be.

BIOEN.

Well, think how thou bear thee ;
But the chief that shall slay
My comrade, shall wear the
 ³¹ Blood-eagle, the day
That thou fallest.

FRITHIOF.

 O fear not ;
Not one of my foes
Shall hear, when I hear not,
The red cock that crows.

XVII.

FRITHIOF VISITS KING RING.

KING Ring was on his throne, with his red and
rosy bride,

A drinking of his Christmas ale, his nobles by his
side:

Like Spring and Autumn pairing, the twain did
seem to be,

For she was as the kindly Spring, but Autumnlike
was he.

An aged man, unknown of all, did step right
boldly in,

His mantle wrapped around his face, his clothes
were all of skin,

His chin was leaned upon his breast, a staff in
hand he bare;

• Yet taller he did seem to be than ere a noble there.

He sat him on a lowly bench, the bench was by the
 door,
 The beggar sits there now-a-days, and there he sat
 of yore ;
 The courtiers smiled, and whispers strange around
 the chamber ran,
 And scornful fingers pointed at, the shabby bear-
 skin-man.

Then fire flashed from the strangers eyes, he viewed
 the nobles round,
 He stretched his hand, he seized a youth, he raised
 him from the ground ;
 He jerked him up, and twirled him round, and
 rocked him fro and to,
 Then all the others held their tongues, the wisest
 thing to do.

“ Who breaks my peace, and quarrels there, so
 “ wanton and so free ?
 “ Come hither, aged Stranger, and tell thy tale to
 “ me ;
 “ Thy name, and wants, and whence ye come, and
 “ whitherwards ye go,”
 The aged king, all angrily, bespoke the Stranger so.

" Ye ask enough," that old man said, " yet I will
 " not repine,
 " To tell thee all, except my name, 'tis all remains
 " of mine ;
 " In Anger was I born and bred, from land to
 " land I roam,
 " My last nights lair was Wolfsden, and Broken is
 " my home.

" In days of yore, I rode upon the dragons of the
 " sea,
 " Their wings were spread, as wings of strength,
 " and fast they flew with me :
 " But now the bark, that once was wight, lies
 " cripple on the strand ;
 " Myself is old, and burns for bread, the salt by
 " the sea sand.

" 'Tis all to see thy wisdom, that I hie me here so
 " lorn,
 " Thy courtiers met me scornfully, no mark am I
 " for scorn ;
 " I gave a fool a twirl or so, yet set the idle thing
 " All scathless on his legs again ; forgive me that,
 " King Ring."

"Ye speak the sooth," King Ring replied, "old
 "age must honored be;
 "Come, leave thy lowly cushion there, and sit thee
 "next to me;
 "But first and foremost cast, I pray, thy strange
 "disguise away;
 "For ill accordeth guest disguised, with princes
 "festal day."

Down dropped the shaggy bear-skin then; that ill-
 beseeming vest;
 And lo! a noble warrior before them stands confest;
 Tdown, and o'er his shoulders broad, from off his
 lofty head,
 The yellow locks, all comelily, in curls of gold were
 spread.

A mantle o'er his back was hung, of velvet blue
 and rare;
 A silver belt, five fingers broad, with pictured
 beasts was there,
 The artist had embossed it so—and lifelike they
 chased,
 Each other round and round about the heroes
 girdled waist.

A massy ring of richest gold, was twined around
 his hand ;
 A sword was shining on his thigh, like lightning-
 flash at stand ;
 All calmly, and composedly, heviewed the circle o'er,
 And seemed as fair as Balder bright, and tall as
 Asa-Thor.

The queen she reddened suddenly, then turned both
 pale and wan ;
 So streamers bright, may flaunt with light, the snows
 they fall upon ;
 Her heaving bosom beat as fast below her tightened
 vest,
 As water-lilies sink and rise beneath the wild waves
 crest.

Now silence in the royal hall ! now strait a call was
 heard,
 The time was come for making vows, and Freyers
 boar appeared ;
 On shining silver charger borne, its knees were bent
 beneath
 With garlands round its breast of brawn, and fruits
 between its teeth.

So Ring, the king, upreared his self, and shook his
locks so hoar,

And vowed a vow, and laid his hand on forehead
of the boar :

“ I swear to bait bold Frithiof, a dreadnought
“ though he be ;

“ So help me Thor and Odin, and help me mighty
Frey.”

With bitter smile, upreared his self, the Stranger
from his place ;

A flush of hero-anger was mantling on his face ;
He dashed his sword on table, that thundered as he
spoke,

And each big warrior started up from off his bench
of oak.

“ Now hear, Sir King, my vow for me, as I have
“ heard thine own,

“ Young Frithiof is my friend of old, the firmest
“ I have known ;

“ I swear to fight for Frithiof, come thou, come
“ all thy horde ;

“ So help me my good Norna, and help me that
“ good sword.”

King Ring replied, "thy speech is plain, and plain
" thy speech should be ;
" For Norman kings well love to hear the words
" that fall so free :
" Queen ! take the biggest beaker up, and fill
" it with the best,
" And bid him drain it for our sake, and bid him
" be our guest."

The noble lady took the horn, it stood before her
hand ;
Horn of a bull, King Ring had slain, the wildest
in the land ;
It stood on feet of silver bright, was bound with
rings of gold,
And cunning hands had graven on it histories of
old.

With downcast eye, and blushing cheek, she took
the goblet up,
Her fingers trembled as she raised that shining
silver cup ;
Not evening rays so ruddily on lily-blossoms shine,
As on her taper hands did burn those ruby drops
of wine.

The lady set the goblet down, the Stranger took
it up,
Not two strong men, in these new days, could drain
that mighty cup ;
When lightly and unblenchingly, to please the
gracious queen,
The valiant hero drank it dry, nor took one breath
between.

A minstrel sat beside the throne, he sang his best
that day,
And told a tale of tenderness, an old Norwegian
lay ;
Of Hachbarts fates and Signes love—his voice was
sweet and low,
That iron hearts began to melt, and tears were seen
to flow.

He changed his hand, and turned to sing Valhallas
championry,
How kings of old had fought by land, and how
they swam by sea ;
Then gleamed each eye, and shone each blade with
heroic-like intent,
And fleetly round the drinking-board the mighty
beaker went.

And now the duties of the night, the drinking-deep,
began ;

I say that every chieftain there drank dry a Christ-
mas can ;

They went to bed, as best they might, when that
carouse was o'er,

But Ring, the king, that aged man, did sleep with
Ingebore.

XVIII.

THE SLEDGE.

KING Ring, with his queen, will travel o'er
The mirrorlike ice of the ocean floor.

“ O go not so,” said the stranger bold ;
“ The ice is frail, and the wave is cold.”

“ Kings,” cried Ring, “are seldom drowned ;
“ The brave goes strait, the coward round.”

The Stranger frowned at Rings reply,
And studded his feet right hastily.

The harnessed steed is tackled on,
Snorteth fire, and paws to be gone.

“ Now fly thy fleetest, fast and free,
“ If ³⁸ Sleipners heart still beats in thee.”

Aye, and he flew like a wintry gale,
The king is glad, but the queen is pale.

Yet the skaiting stranger moves with speed,
Before the sledge, and beside the steed.

And carveth out, as he goeth before,
Ingebores name, on the slippery floor.

So they went o'er ice and snow,
But treacherous Rana lurked below :

She started a hole in her silver roof,
And broke it beneath the coursers hoof.

Ingebore grew pale and wan ;
Whirlwindlike the guest came on ;

Bored with his heel in the ice so fast,
That he griped the coursers mane in haste ;

Lifted the whole with a single strain,
And set the sledge on its road again.

“ Thanks,” said Ring, when his feat was o'er,
“ Frithiofs self had scarce done more.”

So home they hied for the palace of Ring ;
Where the Stranger awaited the welcome Spring.

XIX.

FRITHIOFS TEMPTATION.

SPRING is come; the birds are twittering, bright's
the sun, and green the tree;
Loosened rivulets are singing, dancing downwards
to the sea;
Glowing like the cheeks of Beauty, from their buds
the roses peep;
Life and hope, in every bosom, wake from out their
winters sleep.

Now the youthful and the aged, queen and king,
will join the chace,
And the courtiers throng the meeting such a hun-
tress deigns to grace:
Bows and arrows twang and clatter, vaulting
coursers paw the ground;
Hooded falcons scream their loudest, harness
glitters, horns resound.

See the huntress-queen approaches ! Frithiof turn
 thine eyes away ;
 Sitting on a milk white courser, as the sun bestrides
 the day ;
 Half a Freya, half a Rota, fairer than the pair
 combined,
 And her light-blue mantle, waving, dances to the
 western wind.

Look not on those eyes of heaven, look not on those
 curls of light ;
 Hearts that trust themselves to view them, rue the
 day they saw the sight ;
 Gaze not on those cheeks, that change as rose-
 o'ershadowed lily wreaths ;
 Hear no sound that lady whispers ; 'tis the breath
 that April breathes.

Now the hunter-train is starting, Heisan ! over hill
 and dale !
 Horns are clanging, hawks are soaring, lodestarlike,
 towards Odins hall ;
 Trembling birds, in deepest forests, seek their nests,
 outspeed the wind ;
 Fiercer falcons spur to seize them, beak and claws,
 outstretched, behind.

Ring, the king, can scarcely follow trains that
wander far and wide ;

Silent all, and all in anguish, Frithiof rideth by
his side.

Gloomy thoughts and strange suggestions dwell
within the heroes breast ;

Turn him where he will he hears the still small
voice of their unrest.

“ Fool to leave the winds and waters, fool to leave
“ thy ocean home ;

“ Sombre sorrow flies from ocean, with the breeze
“ that curls its foam ;

“ Sinks the chief? some danger woos him, calls
“ him to the warriors dance,

“ And his saddest sorrows leave him, blinded by
“ his helmets glance.

“ Here a harsher fate has found me ; here un-
“ speakable my pain ;

“ Melancholy sits beside me, broods within my
“ breast and brain ;

“ Bright-haired Balders wasted temple, and that
“ recollected oath

“ Which she broke—No, Nornas broke it—Nornas
“ hostile to us both.

" They that envy mans affections, they that
 " wrought my souls unrest,
 " They that robbed me of my rosebud, planted it
 " on Winters breast ;
 " What should winter seek with roses ? can he feel
 " their worth and price,
 " When his chilly breath encrusteth bud, and
 " leaf, and stalk with ice."

So he sighed, and so they entered deep within a
 lonely glade,
 Darkened by o'erhanging mountains, darkened by
 the fir-trees shade.
 Ring, the ancient king, dismounted : " fresh the
 " breeze, and soft the sward,
 " Weary chiefs have need of sleeping ; I will
 " slumber, thou shalt guard."

" Sleep not so ; the field is cheerless, Norways
 " blasts are bleak and chill ;
 " Aged kings should sleep in safety ; home canst
 " go and sleep thy fill ;"
 " Slumber, like the winds of heaven, comes from
 " whence we hope it least ;"
 Ring replied, " but guests unkindly grudge their
 " host an old mans rest."

Frithiof took his mantle off him, spread it on the
grassy lea ;

Aged Ring reclined upon it, with his head on
Frithiofs knee ;

Slept as sound as weary warriors, after battle, take
their rest

On their shield ; as sleeps an infant, cradled on its
mothers breast.

So he slumbers ; hark ! there sings a coal-black
bird from neighbouring tree ;

“ Hasten, Frithiof ! slay your foeman, quench your
“ quarrel suddenly.

“ Take his queen, more rightly yours, glut your
“ vengeance to its fill,

“ Not a human eye beholds thee, and the deep
“ dark grave is still.”

Frithiof listens ; hark ! there sings a snow-white
bird from neighbouring tree ;

“ What if human eyes behold not ? Odins eyes are
“ swift to see.

“ Wilt thou slay an helpless olding ? Craven wilt
“ thou murder sleep ;

“ So ye reap not heroes honour, whatsoe’er besides
“ ye reap.”

So those wondrous songsters chaunted ; sternly
 Frithiof took his blade,
 Cast it far, and cast it fiercely from him, in the
 dark woods shade :
 He that tempted flew to Nastrond ; but the bird
 with snow-white wings,
 Sunward soaring, music making, like a harpstring,
 sweetly sings.*

As they sped them, Ring awakened ; “sweet that
 “ sleep has been to me ;
 “ Very sweetly age reposes rocked on youths
 “ protecting knee.
 “ Where has flown thy falchion, stranger ? light-
 “ nings brother, where is he ?
 “ What hath severed sword and champion ? they
 “ that ne’er should parted be.”

“ Little skills it ;” Frithiof answered, “ Norways
 “ land hath swords beside ;
 “ Tongue of sword is ill at counsel, speaks the
 “ words of wrath and pride ;
 “ Swarthy spirits, Helas children, crowd around
 “ uplifted steel ;
 “ Sleeping age, and locks of silver, ill they teach
 “ such fiends to feel.”

“ I have never slumbered, Frithiof! I have only
 “ trial made ;
 “ Wisest men are slow to rest on stranger friend,
 “ or untried blade.
 “ Thou art, Frithiof; when you entered, Norways
 “ chieftain stood revealed ;
 “ Long the king has known, most surely, all his
 prudent guest concealed.

“ Wherefore crept ye to my palace, hiding both
 “ your name and race?
 “ Save to steal my lovely princess from her aged
 “ lords embrace.
 “ Honor, Frithiof, rarely enters nameless to the
 “ festal board ;
 “ Clear his front as suns at noon-day, dauntless as
 “ the heroes sword.

“ Fame had told me of a Frithiof, scorning Gods,
 “ and smiting men,
 “ Quick to cleave a foemans harness, quick to burn
 “ an Asas fane.
 “ Such I dreamed, should come conducting shielded
 “ chiefs against my land ;
 “ And he came disguised and lonely, with a beggars
 “ staff in hand.

" Why so sad and shameful, Frithiof? I have been
 " of youthful blood ;
 " Life is but, at best, a struggle ; youth its bursting
 " Berserk-mood ;
 " Fittest for restraining bucklers, till its fearful
 " strife be striven ;
 " I have pitied and forgotten, I have proven and
 " forgiven.

" See now ! I am old and hoary, verging fast
 " towards lifes decline ;
 " Take in charge my people for me, take my
 " princess, she is thine ;
 " Be my son till death, and sojourn in my palace
 " as before ;
 " Swordless champion shall protect me, and our
 " ancient feud is o'er."

" Never," answered Frithiof sternly, " came I as
 " a thief to thee ;
 " Had I wished to steal thy princess, say, whose
 " arm had hindered me ?
 " Once to view that lovely lady was this earnest
 " hearts desire ;
 " Fool ! that fatal sight rekindled all its only half-
 " quenched fire.

“ But alas! too soon I sought her ; tore myself
 “ away too late ;

“ Injured Heavens hand is on me, angry Gods
 “ direct my fate.

“ Balder bright, whose love unbounded deems
 “ each thing on earth its own,

“ Only spurns the hapless outlaw, hates and
 “ maddens me alone.

“ Varg-i-Veum, so they call me ; Norways mothers
 “ now may tame

“ Screaming babes, and froward children, with the
 “ sound of Frithiofs name.

“ Wretched son, whom earth, his mother, casts
 “ away unwept, unblest,

“ Peaceless in the home that spurns him, peaceless
 “ in his own sad breast.

“ Not on earth, for all she smileth, will I seek the
 “ peace I mourn ;

“ For its trees give shade nor shelter, underfoot
 “ its green swards burn.

“ Ingebore is lost for ever ; wedded with the aged
 “ Ring ;

“ Frithiofs sun has set, and saddest night unfurled
 “ her raven wing.

“ Back then to my world of waters—come my
“ dragon—galley good,
“ Bathe again thy swarthy bosom joyous in the
“ briny flood ;
“ To the clouds thy white wings lifting, through
“ the hissing waters cleave,
“ Far as stars above may guide us, far as waves
“ beneath us heave.

“ Let me hear the surges thunder, let me hear
“ the tempests howl ;
“ When it crashes loudest round me, then is peace
“ in Frithiofs soul.
“ Clang of shields, and sleet of lances, on the
“ midmost oceans wave !
“ So shall Frithiof seek Valhalla, through the
“ portals of the grave.”

XX.

KING RINGS DEATH.

THE steeds of the morning,
That flew with the dawning,
Ne'er rose from the ocean so brightly before ;
The sunbeams endeavour,
Was stronger than ever,
To visit the chieftain ; it played on his door.

One entered in sorrow,
To say his good morrow ;
The king sat in sickness, the breast of his queen
Beat with the motion
Of waves, on an ocean,
Where trouble is seated, or breezes have been.

“ The sea-horses pillow,
“ Is Ranas blue billow ;
“ Its wings be to bear him across her blue foam.
“ The stranger must hie from,
“ The rover must fly from
“ His faithfulest friend, and his fatherlike home.

" Take back the token
 " Of faith that is broken ;
 " The ring that thou gavest, now give I to thee.
 " Frithiof is hardened,
 " Ingebore pardoned ;
 " Nothing remains but the memory of me.

" No hearth-stone before me,
 " No smoke to curl o'er me,
 " That cheery blue messenger ; man is a slave.
 " My Norna may give me,
 " If ocean receive me,
 " A grave in her depths, or a home on her wave.

" Keep ye from roaming
 " Abroad in the gloaming,
 " When breezes are blowing and daylight is o'er.
 " The moon may be flashing,
 " The wave may be dashing
 " Some bone of the exile, to bleach on the shore."

Ring that was sinking,
 Chided his shrinking ;
 " Women may whimper and children may cry:
 " The death-song is rolling,
 " The death-bell is tolling ;
 " What will ye more ? we were born—we shall die.

" Nornas ordaining
 " Mocks our complaining,
 " Heeds not our weeping, and hears not our prayer;
 " My princess I give thee—
 " My people I leave thee—
 " Keep them, in charge, for my orphan and heir.

" Peace has possess'd me,
 " Friendship caresst me;
 " Peace was the sweetest when friends were around:
 " When war was before me
 " I flung my shield o'er me,
 " Nor shrunk from its tumult, nor blenched at its
 " sound.

" Now set we for speeding,
 " The ³³ Spearheads a-bleeding;
 " Strawdeath becomes but the craven and slave;
 " The spirit that taketh
 " Its ordinance, maketh
 " Dying and living alike to the brave."

Then truly forboding
 His onset to Odin,
 He cut the death-runes on his arm and his breast;
 The blood flowing brightly,
 Fell redly and lightly
 Over the silvery hair of his chest.

" Norway for ever !
 " Fill me a measure !
 " Pride of the waves that thy children shall sway.
 " Keep thee, that never
 " Thou cease thee to treasure
 " Corn that is yellow and hairs that are gray.

" Peace! how I sought thee !
 " Fain would have bought thee !
 " Bloodier warriors scared thee from me ;
 " Now thou appearest,
 " Nearest and dearest,
 " Waiting your friend on yon Deities knee.

" Hail, ye Immortals !
 " Open your portals !
 " Bear me aloft for my share in your feast ;
 " See ! how the wine in
 " The beaker is shining,
 " Bright as a helmet, to welcome the guest."

Ceasing, and turning
 Away from the mourning,
 He prest on their hands, as he bade them farewell ;
 His eye shut in night then,
 His spirit took flight then,
 Flew, with a sigh, with Allfader to dwell.

XXI.

THE DIRGE.

THE high-born king has gone aloft,
Is seated in his pride;
His buckler braced upon his arm,
His sabre on his side;
And steeds there are, enow to slay
Upon his grave, the burial-day.

He rides along the rainbows arch,
That bends beneath its freight;
That bends and swags as heroes pass,
For well it feels their weight.
Valhallas doors unfold to greet him,
And Asa-hands stretch out to meet him.

The corsair Thor is far away,
Where eastern oceans swell;
But ancient Odin holds him out
The horn of hydromel.
And Freyas hands his brows adorn
With bright ³⁴blue flowers and braided corn.

Now Braga bard, with harp of gold,
 Indites the praise most meet ;
 There ceases each celestial voice,
 He sings so loud and sweet.
 * Vanadis drank the words he said,
 With her hand beneath her head.

* * * * *

The swords and the standards are flashing ;
 But the spear and the shield sing to them.
 The waves and the waters are dashing ;
 But the bubbling blood shines through them.
 The strength of the hero outspeedeth
 The foe that flies from the field ;
 But the mouth of the ³⁶ Berserk bleedeth,
 For he bites the brink of his shield.

When Peace, and Plenty, and Love,
 And Wisdom are met together,
 There rises their incense above,
 Like sighs in wintry weather :
 They guard the realms, at their proudest,
 From a golden, glistening throne ;
 No one loved them as thou didst,
 Thou heir of the Asas own !

* Freya.

Wise Vallfader weigheth

The words that come from on high ;

Soquebecks maiden stayeth

The tide of things that go by.

Murmuring Mimer ! who steerest

Thy waves at their own ³⁶ sweet will ;

Deepest of fountains and clearest !

His wisdom was deeper still.

One of heavenly birth,

Staid Forsete, presides

Over the laws of earth,

Over Urdas tides.

Ring presided above,

Till the hate of the foeman was deadened ;

And bound in bands of love

The hands that vengeance had reddened.

Bright, as are heavens eyes,

Red, as a sunlit sea,

Is the gold that sovereigns prize—

Freely it flowed from thee.

Ring, the king, bestowed

Gifts of gold to our fill ;

Yet from his lips there flowed

Comfort, kindlier still.

Welcome ! best and boldest !
Vallhalls worthiest heir !
When the world shall have come to its oldest,
Men shall talk of thee there.
Braga rises to meet thee,
With the horn of mead held forth ;
And the ancient Nornas greet thee,
The first of the kings of the North.

XXII.

THE CHOICE OF THE KING.

To council-field ! the gatherers roam,
O'er hill, and dale, and glen ;
King Ring is dead, and time is come
To choose a chief again.

The yeoman from the chimney-ledge,
Takes down his sword so blue,
And runs his nail along its edge,
To see that edge be true.

His tiny boys with wonder view
The steel he girdeth on,
And strive to raise it, two by two ;
Too great a weight for one.

His daughter scours his helmet bright,
And makes its face look fair,
And blushes, as she brings to light
Her own, reflected there.

And last he takes his big round shield ;
It fits as best it can ;
Health to the arms that freemen wield !
Hail iron-harnessed man !

Thou, and thy like, present the front
That keeps the lands increase ;
That boldliest bides the battles brunt,
And freeliest speaks in peace.

They hied them on, those men of proof,
In plate and mail they march,
To council-field, where all their roof
Was heavens azure arch.

Where Frithiof stood on council-stone,
And underneath his hand,
A little child, the chieftains son,
With golden hair, did stand,

Then murmured low that warrior-band,
“ The child is all too young,
“ To lead the swordsmen of the land,
“ And speak with judgments tongue.”

But Frithiof set the tender thing,
Aloft upon his shield ;
“ Here sits your new Norwegian king,
“ To lead you in the field.

“ And, proof of the high ancestry,

“ That ancient Odin gave,

“ Sits in his shield, as fearlessly

“ As fish within the wave.

“ I vow to beat his foemen down,

“ And strive with life and limb,

“ To set the fathers golden crown,

“ Some future day on him.

“ Forsete, son of Balder fair,

“ Has heard the words I say ;

“ And when I break the oath I swear,

“ May strike me dead the day.”

The little child sat on the targe,

As kings sit on their throne ;

And fearlessly did look at large,

Like eaglet at the sun.

The boy he was of fiery mood,

And grew impatient there,

Leaped down, to where the yeomen stood,

A kingly leap in air.

Then shouted loud, that warrior-band,

“ We choose thee for our king ;

“ Lead thou the chiefs, and judge the land,

“ Thou shield-borne son of Ring.

" But Frithiof shall rule instead,
 " Till he grow stout and strong ;
 " And take the mother to his bed,
 " That he has loved so long."

The hero frowningly replied,
 " To-day we fill the throne ;
 " And when we meet to choose a bride,
 " Myself will choose mine own.

" I first must visit Balders shrine,
 " And bend him by my prayer,
 " And meet the frown of Norna mine,
 " That bides in anger there.

" And next bespeak, in words sublime,
 " The buckler-bearing maids,
 " That dwell beneath the tree of time,
 " And nestle in its shades.

" The light-haired God, whose angry strain
 " Did tear my bride from me,
 " Alone can give that bride again ;
 " If bride she e'er may be."

He paced across the purple ling,
 Nor further sought to speak ;
 But first did greet the new-made king,
 And kiss him on the cheek.

XXIII.

FRITHIOF ON HIS FATHER BARROW.



- “ How gladly smiles the sun, whose radiance
streameth,
“ In twinkling showers, over branch and bough ;
“ Lit on each glistening bead of dew, that
seemeth
“ An embryo heaven in the world below ;
“ So pure it is, so bright it loves to glow.
“ Sure, that is blood that steeps bright Balders
fane ;
“ Alas ! no earthly sunset shineth so,
“ Sinking, like golden shield, beneath the main,
“ Ere Hoder dark descends to hold his midnight
reign.
- “ First, let returning memory brood anew,
“ Over the haunts, its childhood loved so well ;
“ The same sweet blossoms wear the same bright
dew ;
“ The same sweet warblers bid their music swell,
“ O'er their familiar forests native dell.

- “ The same smooth sand receives the same white foam ;
 “ O ! a sad tale those whispering waters tell :
 “ False, faithless waves ; ye tempted me to roam,
 “ And look, in vain, for peace, I failed to find in home.

- “ Streams of the valley ! that so oft have borne
 “ The bold young swimmer on your backs of blue ;
 “ Shades of the forest ! where, too soon, was sworn
 “ Eternal truth, such as the world ne’er knew,
 “ Since the first fleeting bosom turned untrue.
 “ Barks of the birchen trees, that bear enshrined
 “ Our carven names—abide they still by you ?
 “ Groves of the trembling leaf, and silver rind—
 “ All, all is as it was, yet I am changed in kind.

- “ *All as it was* thou sayest—Is Framness there ?
 “ And Balders temple of the holy strand ?
 “ That rose so lovely through the clear thin air ;
 “ And now lie low—One fell to feed the brand
 “ Lit by the exiles sacrilegious hand.

- “ The curses deep of men, the wrath divine
 “ Press on the heart that wasted that fair land ;
 “ Turn sinless pilgrim from these scenes of
 mine ;
 “ Lest wolves unclean be found, where once was
 Balders shrine.

- “ There is a tempter in the heart of man ;
 “ The fiendish Nidhogg from the gloom below ;
 “ He hates the Asa-light, that shines as plain,
 “ As the suns own, on every heroes brow,
 “ And on his sword, scorning each dastard
 blow :
 “ By him the works of sin and shame are
 planned ;
 “ And, when he does what darkness bids him do ;
 “ Over a smoking shrine, or wasted land
 “ Triumphs, and claps, for joy, his skinny coal black
 hand.

- “ Is there no pardon, Deities on high ?
 “ Mild, meek-eyed Balder, may no deeds atone ?
 “ Men take atonement when their kinsmen die ;
 “ The kinder Gods forgive for prayer alone,
 “ Uttered from out the hearts repentant tone.

- “ And thou, they say, art kindest, God of
Light?
“ Ask thousand offerings, I will bring each one.
“ Thy shrine was never burned in Frithiofs
spite;
“ Take this stain from his shield, that else is
perfect white.

- “ Take off my burden, more than man may
bear;
“ Quench the fell thoughts that in this bosom
brood;
“ And let a lifetimes noble deeds repair.
“ The one transgression of a youthful mood,
“ The boiling o’er of too tempestuous blood.
“ I am unused to tremble; I would try
“ My fate with all the powers of Helas
flood;
“ Thou Balder, of the moonlight-looking eye,
“ Art all that Frithiof fears, or fiend, or deity.

- “ Here is my fathers barrow, doth he sleep?
“ O he hath travelled there whence none return;
“ Dwells in the tents of yonder starlit steep,
“ And drinks the mead, and sees the bucklers
burn
“ Of his translated comrades—Turn, O turn

- “ Thou guest of Asas, look down heavens blue
 side,
 “ On that proud son, whose spirit now must
 mourn
 “ In vain ; no gifts to soothe sepulchral pride
 “ Brings he ; but asks how Balder best is pacified.

- “ Is death so silent ? hath the tomb no tongue ?
 “ The stern Angantyr answered from the grave ;
 “ The ³⁷ sword-girt maiden, who bespoke him
 strong ;
 “ The sword was biting, and the maiden brave.
 “ Is Angurvadel a less worthy glaive
 “ Than hers ? go prove it Eyrithiof on the throne
 “ Of Odins self ; despair shall make thee brave ;
 “ One twilight glimpse, my sire, for thy sad
 son :
 “ The noblest soul worst bears an altered Asas
 frown.

- “ Still art thou silent ; the blue billows sing ;
 “ Lay down thine ear, and list to what they say ;
 “ The tempest thunders ; hang thee on its
 wing,
 “ And whisper comfort as it flies this way.
 “ The western sky is hung, at close of day,

" With starry chaplets, each a golden bead ;
 " Make them thy heralds ; speed, as best ye may,
 " Spirits of peace ! no answer in my need,
 " No word, or sign to soothe—The dead are weak
 indeed."

Slow sunk the orb, as rocked the world asleep
 The lullaby of sunsets gentle breath ;
 Silently roll, up heavens azure steep,
 The purple wheels of even, from beneath
 The fragrant earth, bright as a rosy wreath,
 (A lovely scene for such as heartsick be ;)
 Spread round yon dark brown hill and purple heath :
 Swiftly there flies from o'er the western sea,
 A golden-pinioned form, with crimson blazonry.

A Halo light on this our earthly ground ;
 Above it bears a lovelier name, I ween :
 Slowly it settled o'er the lonely mound,
 Just where, before, the former fane had been ;
 A crown of gold upon a ground of green.
 Above, around, and o'er the Gods abode
 It spread, a sight that none ere then had seen :
 I say, it sank at last on earth, and shewed
 A shrines fair front, where erst great Balders shrine
 had stood.

A glimpse of ³⁸ Breidablick, whose walls are light
 As e'en the silver, on the cliff it shone ;
 Of dark blue steel its columns azure height,
 And the big altar was one agate stone.
 It seemed as if the air upheld alone
 Its dome, unless supporting spirits bore it,
 Studded with stars like Odins spangled throne ;
 A light inscrutable burned fiercely o'er it ;
 In sky-blue mantles, sat the gold-crowned Gods
 before it.

And see, the Nornas stand to guard its gate,
 Each leaned a rune-encircled shield upon ;
 Serene they stand, in staid and speechless state ;
 Three sisterseeming maids, unlike alone
 As three sweet bursting buds whose stalk is one.
 And ³⁹ Urda points to where the ruins lay,
 And Skulda where the newborn temple shone.
 Can Frithiof read what those strange phantoms
 say ?
 He wonders, and exults—the vision passed away.

“ Hail ! holy maidens from the fount of time ;
 “ I read thy riddle, ancient hero sire !
 “ To bid a second shrine arise sublime ;
 “ Whose newbuilt walls shall heavenwards aspire,
 “ Bright as they were before the fatal fire.

- “ Now feel the exultation to repair,
 “ With deeds of peace, the madness of thine ire.
 “ Let thy unwithered heart unlearn despair ;
 “ The God of Light forgives, has heard the sup-
 pliants prayer.

- “ Welcome ye stars, that so serenely move !
 “ Now I rejoice in your melodious throng.
 “ Welcome ye streamers, kindled from above !
 “ Ye seemed to me but brands of fire, so long
 “ As Balders influence pressed stern and strong.
 “ Grow green, my fathers grave ! ye waters !
 “ strive
 “ 'To keep in tune your old familiar song.
 “ For I will slumber on my shield, and live
 “ To know that men repent, and injured Gods
 “ forgive.”
-

XXIV.

THE ATONEMENT.

THE work was ended ; Balders new-built fane
Stood on the spot whereon the old had lain ;
But fairer far ; where elm-tree stakes had made,
Ragged with moss, the ancient palisade,
Stood iron palings, socketed in stone ;
A golden boss surmounting every one.
Just as an iron-harnessed army stands,
With flaming crests, and halberts in their hands,
Stood they—around the new-enclosed abode,
Serried and strong, the guardians of the God.
Of unhewn granite, was the outer wall,
That only giants hands should toil to roll ;
Of native granite, pointed on the sky,
Mocking it with its own eternity.
A bard might deem the work was half divine,
And imitative of Upsalas shrine,
Designed by heaven, that human eye might see
One pattern of immortal masonry.

Proudly it stood upon the mountain brow,
 And viewed its image in the wave below,
 And watched, like monarch seated on his throne,
 The lovely valley, that it called its own ;
 Bright as a belt of flowers, wrapped around,
 Buds on each tree, and gems upon the ground,
 Where warbling choirs, and evermurmuring rills
 Wooed the untiring echoes from their hills.
 Arching, and high, the portal rose to view,
 That crested giants passed, unstooping, through.
 In double rows, a gallery between,
 Were ranged the pillars, that upbore within
 The vaulted roof, whose ample dome, at large,
 Hung o'er the middle, like a golden targe.
 Facing the door, the altar of the God,
 Hewn of Norwegian solid marble, stood ;
 A belt of shining steel, five-fingers deep,
 Coiled round its margin, like a snake asleep ;
 With ancient wisdom fraught, engraven o'er
 With runes from Havamal, or Valas mystic lore.
 The porch stood out, its roof was studded round
 With stars of silver, on a deep-blue ground ;
 The form of Balder rose in silver there,
 White as the moon, and passionless as her.
 Such was the shrine ; there entered, two by two,
 Twelve lovely virgins, of the rosebuds hue,
 And innocence, out-glancing from within
 Their silver veils, that were so light and thin.

They moved in many-twinkling mazes, free
 Round the new altar of the Deity ;
 Glad as the sunbeams o'er a stream's recess,
 And light as Elfin in a wilderness,
 Ere envious sunbeams, from each twinkling stem,
 Have kissed the dews that are the beads of them.
 Just as they danced, they chaunted soft and sweet,
 Timing their voices to their falling feet,
 A joyous strain—how bright-eyed Balders birth
 Was loved by things in heaven, and hailed on earth ;
 A solemn strain—how nature ceased to smile,
 When Hoder stretched him on the funeral pile.
 The changing voices of their varied song,
 Sounded like accents of no earthly tongue,
 And liker those of Breidablickas halls ;
 Or, if ought earthly, such sweet madrigals
 As sense-enchanted maidens take delight
 To sing, in sorrow, to the starlit night ;
 What time the wakeful bird, serene and fond,
 Sings to its mate upon the bough beyond ;
 And silver moonbeams kiss the silver stem
 Of white-leaved aspens, tremulous as them.

Silently standing, bent upon his blade,
 Did Frithiof watch them, till his fancy strayed
 Back to his boyhood, and his spirit thence
 Drank the deep memory of its innocence.
 O the sweet images the child surveys !
 The fairy phantoms of our earlier days !

Throngs of unearthly spirits, wondrous fair,
 With sky-blue eyes, and gold-entangled hair,
 That speak as tenderly, and smile as sweet
 As maids who love us, or as friends who greet.
 Then sank the thoughts of all his former strife,
 The toils and tumults of his corsair life ;
 And, like a bloody cloud from heavens high
 plain,

All bitterness of heart, and phantasy of brain.
 So calm he was, he seemed to stand, upon
 The grave that held them, like a Bautastone ;
 That hands unseen, yet dear to those who sleep,
 Have hung with cypress-wreaths, and flowers that
 weep.

As the song swoll, his spirits wings took flight
 Upwards, and heavenwards, towards Valhallas
 height ;

A softer influence unheard, unfelt,
 Taught the cold sternness of his heart to melt ;
 And human hate and anger died away,
 Like stars of ice upon an April day.
 An ocean of deep stillness seemed to lie
 Over his souls tideless tranquillity ;
 So full of joy, he seemed to catch the tone
 Of natures heart, responsive to his own ;
 So full of love, he could have clasped the race,
 Of earth and heaven, in one vast embrace,
 And held it so—this is to be imbued
 With the deep feelings of sweet brotherhood.

And now the priest came in, not young and fair
 And lovely, like the God that placed him there,
 But bearing marks of many years upon
 His silver temples, and unfurrowed crown :
 Of height majestic ; at his belt appeared
 The venerable whiteness of his beard.
 Unwonted awe invaded Frithiofs breast,
 And bent, for the first time, his eagle crest ;
 So reverend that priest did seem to be,
 And yet so kind, for he spoke peacefully.

“ ⁴⁰ Be welcome, Frithiof ! I have seen before
 “ That thy tempestuous manhood should be o’er ;
 “ That like the madman Berserk, loves to roam,
 “ Yet finds its sweetest best retreat in home.
 “ Think not, my son, that innocence can be
 “ Strong in itself, and, without armour, free :
 “ Often as Thor invaded Yotunheim,
 “ To quell the giant-brood that dwells in them,
 “ Spite of the belt and gloves of steel he wore,
 “ Utgarda-Loke rules as heretofore.
 “ Evil, its own unhallowed powers among,
 “ Yields not, at all, to Strength, itself being
 strong ;
 “ And simple Wisdom unsustained by might,
 “ Falls like an infant in the unequal fight ;
 “ Like Balders beam, on Agirs azure breast,
 “ It sinks and rises with the billows crest,

“ Giving that firmness which before had none—
 “ So Wisdom trusts to Strength it leans upon.
 “ But Strength and Rapine joined, unblest and
 “ bold,
 “ Corrupt themselves, like swords that wear with
 “ mould;
 “ Then comes the drunkenness of life, distress
 “ Mocked by the “ Heron of forgetfulness;
 “ The fitful sleepers dream unsolid things,
 “ And hate themselves, at their awakenings.

“ All Strength of arm, or soul, derives its birth
 “ From “ Ymers body, old ancestral Earth,
 “ Primæval Earth, or Ymer; whose big veins
 “ Are the wide waters of the ocean plains;
 “ Whose giant bones, the hills that rise on high;
 “ Whose breath the breeze is; and whose scalp the
 “ sky.
 “ Yet Ymer lay unfruitful, lifeless, dim,
 “ Till love, ætherial sunshine, smiled on him;
 “ Then swoll the seed, then tender buds were seen,
 “ Then atoms leaped to life, and grass grew green;
 “ The painted blossom, lavish of perfume;
 “ The quivering tree, that mocks the heroes plume;
 “ The golden fruits, with sun-emblazoned rinds;
 “ All living things, after their lovely kinds,
 “ Grew in their joyousness, or took their rest,
 “ Sinless and scatheless, on their mothers breast.

- " 'Tis so with * Askers progeny ; there stands
 " An even balance in Allfaders hands ;
 " One of its weights is Strength, first-born of
 earth ;
 " The other Wisdom is, of heavenly birth.
 " Thor is the emblem of such Strength, whene'er
 " He spans his girth, impatient for the war ;
 " Odin of Wisdom, when his spirit broods
 " O'er Urdas fountain of the silver floods,
 " And Thought and Memory run their daily race,
 " To bear him tidings from the ends of space.
 " Yet Strength, and Wisdom shrank for fear, the
 " day
 " That Balder, heavenly love, was snatched away ;
 " Shorn of the honours of his dazzling crown,
 " Was banished heaven, and sank in darkness
 " down.
 " O ! then the buds, upon the tree of time,
 " Felt the chill change of that ungenial clime,
 " Turned to the yellow leaf, and perished in
 " their prime. }
 " The adder Nidhogg, gnawed upon its root,
 " Poisoned its wholesome juice, and blasted its fair
 " fruit.
 " Sightless before, the Dragon brood of night
 " Unsealed their eye-balls on unwonted light :

* The human race.

" The Serpent of Mid-earth, concealed for sin,
 " Slimy without, and fiery within,
 " Whose venom raised his scales, and well-nigh
 " burst his skin.

" Wolf Fenris howled, and Surturs sword sublime
 " Flashed, like a thunder-bolt, from Muspelheim.
 " Whate'er since then has been in natures field,
 " To mortal or immortal eye, reveal'd,
 " On earth or heaven, are fragments of the strife
 " Between the opposing principles of life.
 " Their battle-field is all creations plan :
 " Creation trembled when the war began ;
 " When Gullincambi, of the blood-red crest,
 " Sounded the clarion for a worlds unrest,
 " Summoning shrilly to the field of death,
 " All things in Heaven above, or Hell beneath ;
 " The sky was as uneasy as the earth.
 " For what we see in smaller figure here,
 " Is done at large within the higher sphere ;
 " So that our little world at best can be,
 " But a reflection of the Deity ;
 " Seen in the mirror shield of history.

" Each bosom bears a Balder of its own ;
 " There was a time when thine, of tenderer tone,
 " Of soul serener, temper more subdued,
 " Felt not its spirits stern inquietude ;
 " But floated onward, borne by childhoods sail,
 " Glad as the visions of a nightingale,

- “ That swings itself asleep upon a tree,
 “ With evenings breezes for its lullaby.
 “ The influence of Balder undefiled,
 “ Lost to the man, revives within the child ;
 “ And Hela, half in sorrow, half in scorn,
 “ Resigns its victim when a babe is born.
 “ But in each human bosom springs a blight ;
 “ Balders black brother, of the brood of night, }
 “ Grows by his side, and intersects his light. }
 “ ’Tis Hoder ; dark as evil actions are ;
 “ Shapeless, and sightless like a new-born bear ;
 “ Ebon his mantle as is Helas own.
 “ (The bright-eyed Balder clothes him with the
 “ sun.)
 “ Stealthily treading, with deceitful look,
 “ Bearing a knife beneath his inky cloak,
 “ The tempter Loke, sharpens the bad brand,
 “ And, Hoder is so blind, directs his hand
 “ To plunge the weapon in his brothers side ;
 “ Then smiles at that unconscious fratricide.
 “ Weep ! for that heavenly love with Balder fled ;
 “ Weep ! for the train of Hell that came instead ;
 “ That Rapine, proud of his unholy might,
 “ Clenches his teeth, and bares his arm for fight.
 “ Groan ! for the headlong malice of the glaive,
 “ Famished as wolves that howl around a grave.
 “ Shriek ! for the pirates corpse-encumbered prow—
 “ These be the scenes that seem so lovely now ;

“ Whilst Innocence, unsolid as a shade,
 “ Dead as is Death, her grave in Hela made,
 “ Is heavenly Light insulted, slain, betrayed. }
 “ Thus Asa-heavens in all their glories shew
 “ But the reflection of this world below ;
 “ And each are only the ideas that dwell
 “ Within Allfaders breast, unchangeable.
 “ Whate’er has been before, whate’er may be,
 “ Is shadowed out in Valas minstrelsy,
 “ Times dirge, and cradle-song—’tis sad and sweet,
 “ And human actions move in time to it.

“ It is an expiation that ye seek—
 “ Look on these eyelids, nor unman thy cheek.
 “ Know that in heaven above, and earth beneath,
 “ One expiation is ; its name is Death.
 “ All times and seasons, tell me what they be ?
 “ Even the fragments of Eternity.
 “ And mortal life, that glides so swiftly on ?
 “ An emanation from Allfaders throne.
 “ And expiation is another name,
 “ For turning back to whence our being came.
 “ The Asas are obnoxious to the tomb,
 “ And Ragnaroka is their day of doom ;
 “ A bloody day, as all, that is, shall see,
 “ On Vigrids hundred-leagued declivity.
 “ All falls : but not in vain, nor unrevenged ;
 “ Evil annihilated, Good but changed ;

- “ Sublimes itself, to suit a nobler doom,
 “ In the red ashes of Creations tomb.
 “ The starry chaplets wither and decay,
 “ And earth is mixed with the absorbing sea ;
 “ Only to rise reborn, enamelled o’er
 “ With gems and flowers, brighter than before ;
 “ Whilst re-illumined stars, themselves as fair,
 “ Watch them in silence through the conscious air.
 “ Regenerate Asas fill their golden stools,
 “ And sinless men, that only Balder rules.
 “ So imitated death, and seeming fate,
 “ Are but ordeals for a higher state.
 “ Purge thee, my spirit ! from the dross of earth ;
 “ Fly ! to the heavenly realms that gave thee birth ;
 “ Sport in thine innocence, as calm and free
 “ As a glad infant on its fathers knee.
 “ The better part of life is still to come,
 “ Unseen, unborn, and placed behind the tomb.
 “ On earth, we typify our heavenly state,
 “ And, in our own small fashion, expiate.
 “ So, ere the Scald his deeper descant sings,
 “ His careless fingers wander o’er the strings,
 “ Making a soft uncertain melody—
 “ ’Tis wondrous sweet though very low it be.
 “ Glowing, and glowing still his thoughts of fire,
 “ Wake the harmonious thunder of his lyre :
 “ O ! then the beating breast and burning brain, }
 “ Confess the magic madness of the strain ; }
 “ And warriors fight their battles o’er again. }

- “ The multitude, seeing with earthly eyes,
 “ Deem that the Gods are soothed by sacrifice ;
 “ See, how they lead along the unwilling steed,
 “ Proud of his state, impatient of his speed ;
 “ His ardent eyes, for the last time, behold,
 “ His crimson trappings, and his curb of gold—
 “ Thinkst thou the blood, that flows so fast and free,
 “ Is of itself a stern reality ?
 “ A substance, not a type ? that mans offence
 “ Is pardoned for the symbol, not the sense ?
 “ None is the sharer of his friends intent,
 “ And none his proxy in the punishment.
 “ In worlds above, our expiation is
 “ Allfaders bosom, but our own in this.
 “ One sacrifice there is for sin, more meet
 “ Than reeking blood, or incense smelling-sweet :
 “ Even the offering of a humbled heart,
 “ And hopes of vengeance, ne’er before apart.
 “ Canst thou not change to holiness from sin,
 “ Nor calm the angry voice that sounds within—
 “ Why stand, expectant, on the temple here ?
 “ It were impiety to come so near.
 “ Why build a shrine, with sacrilegious hand ?
 “ When that of thine own heart is foul and stained,
 “ I say that Balder will give peace to thee,
 “ When thou hast found it for thine enemy.

 “ Within the Southern climes, away, afar,
 “ They talk of one that is a Balder there ;

“ Born of a virgin-mother, undefiled :
 “ Allfaders only, coeternal child.
 “ Peace was his watchword, and his sword was love;
 “ And innocence sat brooding, like a dove,
 “ Over his helmet—so he lived, and taught,
 “ Died, and forgave his foes the wrong they wrought :
 “ They laid him in his grave, unwept, unblest,
 “ Beneath the distant palm-trees of the East.
 “ His words outlived him—sages say, his lore
 “ Softens the spirits that were steel before ;
 “ Bends the proud bosom, bids its tempests cease,
 “ And rears a temple dedicate to peace.
 “ At times, my son, my better sense hath caught
 “ Some twilight glimpses of the truths he taught ;
 “ So has, at happier hours, each human soul ;
 “ Though none, untutored, its harmonious whole.
 “ But sure I am, that in the flight of time,
 “ His light shall break upon our darkling clime,
 “ Spread its white wings, as doves extend them now,
 “ And brood protective o’er our Norway snow :
 “ But not for us ; ere then the oak shall wave
 “ Its solemn shadow, mournful, o’er our grave.
 “ Hail ! happier ages, races to be born,
 “ Children of light, and nurselings of the morn,
 “ Sons of our sons, inheritors of Heaven !
 “ Drink of the cup that is so freely given !
 “ Well if such glories, showered from on high,
 “ Chase all the clouds that overhang your sky :

- “ Well if they nurture no contemptuous pride,
 “ Towards those who lived in sin, in darkness
 died ;
 “ Yet sought for light ; that when they failed to
 see,
 “ They fixed their eyes on where it seemed to be.
- “ Dost thou not hate ? hast thou not taught to fear
 “ The royal brothers, that thou shouldest revere ?
 “ Only for that their taunting chafed thy scorn,
 “ And held a bondsmans son too meanly born,
 “ To mix his blood, and sit beside the throne
 “ Of their fair sister, that was Odins own.
 “ True, thou mayst tell me pride in noble birth,
 “ Is all to Fortune due, and nought to worth :
 “ But tell me, Frithiof, for thy bosom can,
 “ Does Chance, or Merit, make the proudest man ?
 “ There is *no* Chance—what seems as such, is
 given
 “ An unearned bounty at the hands of Heaven ;
 “ And humblest men are they, who learn to
 prize,
 “ More than their own deserts, the gifts of Deities.
 “ Thyself is proud of thy victorious brand,
 “ And proud, to madness, of thine iron hand :
 “ But was it thou, or was it Asa-Thor,
 “ That strung thy oak-tree sinews for the war ?
 “ Is it thine own, that heaven-inspired strength,
 “ Swells in thy bosom, till it bursts at length ?

“ Is it thine own, that where thy eye-balls turn,
 “ There lightning seems to flash, and fire to
 burn ?

“ No—higher Nornas, on thy natal day,
 “ Sung o’er thy cradle some auspicious lay :
 “ This is the merit in thy warlike worth—
 “ Nor less, nor greater than a kings in birth.
 “ Speak not of pride in over harsh a tone,
 “ Lest the rude words condemn thee for thine own.
 “ And now that Helge’s fallen——”

“ Where and when ?”

Such the short speech that broke from Frithiof
 then.

“ Vexing with war, he sallied out, to chase
 “ The mountain dwellers of the Lapland race.
 “ Built on a cliff, there stood, beside the way,
 “ A temple, dedicate to ⁴³ Yumala ;
 “ Tottering itself, over the archway stood
 “ A massy form of, what they deemed, a God :
 “ None had approached it ; for a legend ran
 “ From ancient sire to son, from man to man,
 “ Amongst its worshippers, that who first lay
 “ His hand upon it, should see Yumala.
 “ When Helge heard, he clomb the winding stair,
 “ In scorn of him who sat enshrined there ;
 “ The door was bolten to—he seized to shake
 “ The rusted hinges, stern enough to break ;
 “ The image, that had threatened to descend,
 “ Fell on his scalp ; it crushed the Asas friend ;
 “ So he saw Yumala—and this was Helges end. }

" Now Halfdan sits alone in Beles chair ;
 " Proffer thy hand, and leave thy hatred there.
 " Else, is the God but mocked by this fair fane,"
 " And I, his priest, invoked him here in vain."

Just as the priest had ended, Halfdan trod
 Across the copper threshold of the God :
 Silent, uncertain how to speak, he stood
 Beside the door, and, at his distance, viewed,
 With eye askant, and half-uplifted head,
 The foe, he had not yet unlearned to dread.
 Familiar with being feared, the chief unbraced
 The helmet-hater, girded on his waist ;
 Leaned his broad buckler on the altars stone,
 And wore, for arms, his native strength alone.
 " In strifelike ours, where ancient feuds should cease,
 " He wins the palm, who sues the first for peace."
 Then first the blood returned to Halfdams cheek ;
 Then first his lips, reluctant, strove to speak :
 Swift, as a merlin from the falconers fist,
 Slipped the steel gauntlet, beaming, from his wrist ;
 Firm as a rock, they clasped, in friendships bands,
 Each others long alienated hands.
 Peace to thee, Frithiof ! Balder takes the ban
 From off the shoulders of the exiled man.
 Joy to thee weary wanderer ! thou hast felt
 That Gods forgive, and hearts of iron melt—
 Whose is the maiden train that enters now ?
 Whose is yon lady of the regal brow ?

Bright as the moon, the empress of the sky,
 While still attendant stars stand shining by ;
 Lovely, and young, and looking like a bride,
 Before the rest she moves to Halfdans side,
 And if her eye be wet, her cheek be pale,
 But half conceals them with her silver veil.
 Is it because she loves her brother best,
 That so she sinks, in silence, on his breast ?
 No, Frithiof ! No, there is a voice within,
 Stronger than that of brotherhood or kin.
 So sink the maids, that, not unhopd for, meet
 Friends of their childhood whom they fear to greet ;
 So proud and patient bosoms weakest prove,
 Before the spirits that alone they love.
 I say, that Frithiof took her hand, before
 The approving brother, and the priest did pour
 Blessings on Frithiof and Ingebore.

}

THE END.

NOTES.

Note 1, page 2, line 6.

Freya, the Scandinavian Venus: Oder was her husband, Folkvang, her residence; thither went the spirits of departed females.—See Canto V.

Note 2, page 4, line 4.

Valhalla, the Northern Elysium. Iduna was the Goddess of Immortality; Frigga, the Juno, or the Cybele; Gerda, the Aurora of the Scandinavians.

Note 3, page 4, line 21.

Nanna was the wife of Balder; she died, for grief, when she saw her husband on the funeral-pile.

Note 4, page 7, line 14.

Thor, Mars; Thrudvang was his mansion.

Note 5, page 12, line 1.

Disarsala was the hall of the Gods.

Note 6, page 15, line 13.

Two birds, hawks or ravens, are supposed to fly from Odins shoulders, round all space, and to bring him tidings from thence. Their names are Huginn and Muginn, Thought and Memory.— See Canto XXIV.

Note 7, page 18, line 3.

Havamal is the name of one of the Eddaic poems; its first part consists of a collection of sentences, relating to the duties of domestic and political life.

Note 8, page 18, line 19.

Norna means Presiding Spirit, or Destiny.

Note 9, page 24, line 6.

Freyer, the Scandinavian Apollo, as Odin was the Jupiter.

Note 10, page 24, line 18.

Braga, the God of Poetry, as Mimer was of Memory. The well, over which Mimer presided, was Urda, the fount of Wisdom, under the tree of Time; alluded to again in Cantos VIII. and XXI.

Note 11, page 27, line 2.

" In the strange deserts, whence the Asas came."

Those who believed Odin and Thor, and their mythological compeers, all of whom were called Asas, to have been once mortal, and afterwards deified, held also that they came from the East. The Asas of the North correspond with the *Dii majorum Gentium*, of the South. Thor seems more especially to have been called Asa-Thor; Hildur, means Bellona.

Note 12, page 27, line 14.

Vaulunder, the Scandinavian Vulcan; like his Grecian parallel, he was lame.

Note 13, page 27, line 19.

" Alfheim is there; the godheads call it so;"

Those who look at the Northern mythology, beyond its surface, see in the attributes and the actions of its Deities, either simple though wonderful accounts of dead men deified, or allegorical representations of physical (especially astronomical) phenomena. Whichever way of viewing the subject be the truest, the latter is undoubtedly the most poetical; so that in the following description, Frithiofs bracelet exhibits, not merely the mansions of Odin and Balder, and Frey, but also the course of the sun; in other words, it is a Scandinavian Zodiac.

Alfheim, was given to Frey when he cut his teeth. Saga, the goddess of history, sat in the same mansion with Odin, one of whose manifold attributes was Wisdom. But the month over which she presided was one of the Spring months; Soquebeck being the fourth heavenly mansion. Balder was the most

beautiful of the Gods, and to Frithiof, and those whom he interests, he will prove the most important. Bredablick, the seventh heavenly mansion, was his residence; Odin and Frigga, his father and mother; the season he presided over, was Midsummer. He was pre-eminently the God of Light and Warmth, *i. e.* the Sun. As night encroached upon day, darkness upon light, after the middle of the year, Balder was said to be perishing at the hands of his blind brother Hoder, *i. e.* Darkness. On St. John's Day, when the sun is visible above the horizon, at midnight, solemn bonfires were lit all over the North, in honour of Balder. *See* Canto XIII. Forsete, was the son of Balder, and the God of Equity. *See* Canto XXII. Glitner, the tenth heavenly mansion, was the name of the peaceful city, his residence.

It is plain that a mythology, like the Scandinavian, resolvable into an astronomical allegory, is also capable of being further made typical, or, if I may use the expression, spiritualized. So it is here. Balder is, in his first stage of typicalization, not a mere God, but an emblem of the sun; in his second, however, the sun itself becomes typical of a moral quality, namely, Good, as opposed to Evil, or Darkness. I mention this, because in the last Canto, the whole machinery of the Northern Mythology is resolved in emblems of the moral qualities, or spiritualizations of the second degree, Thor, being physical strength; Odin, wisdom; Balder, heavenly love, &c. &c.

Furthermore, it should be remembered that Gerda, Freyer, Hildur, &c. &c., are called respectively Scandinavian Auroras, Apollos, Bellonas, &c., &c., only for the sake of illustration. No one disowns more than the present writer, that spurious criticism which looks for a closer connection between different mythologies than the truth admits, and which prefers identifying, for instance, Odin with Jupiter, Freyer with Apollo, to simply and solely acknowledging their analogy. Such as think that Vaulunder is not quite the Scandinavian Vulcan, are at full liberty to assimilate him to Dædalus, or to any other Demigod, or God, they may prefer.

Note 14, page 34, line 3.

Framness, the name of Frithiofs residence.

Note 15, page 38, line 13.

A strawdeath, *i. e.* a death in a bed, which in Frithiofs time had not begun to be made of the eider-down, was considered so disgraceful for a warrior, that, rather than submit to it, they destroyed themselves ; often, by scoring their bodies with cuts in the shape of *spear-heads*, as is done in Canto XX.

Note 16, page 42, line 4.

The word *grain*, is truly English, and means *branch*. It is found in Danish and Swedish, *gren* ; and is used in the provinces of our own country, and by Shakspeare. See Johnsons Dictionary. The grain of wood, as in the phrase *cutting against the grain*, simply means the direction in which its branch grows.

Note 17, page 44, line 14.

See Note 1.

Note 18, page 53, line 3,

Gefion, the Goddess of Purity, mentioned again in Canto VIII.

Note-19, page 53, line 16.

The Valkyrias were the choosers and conductors of the slain. Mista and Sangrida, in Gray's Ode of the Fatal Sisters, were Valkyrias ; so was his Hilda, the Hildur mentioned in Canto XVII. and Note 2.

Note 20, page 56, line 9.

So in Romeo and Juliet.

JUL. * * * *it is not yet near day ;
It is the nightingale and not the lark,
Believe me love, it is the nightingale.
Yon light is not day-light, I know it, I ;
It is some meteor that the sun exhales, &c.*

This is not the only passage, where the author seems to have had English poets in his eye. The youthful pursuits of Matilda and Redmond, in Rokeby, may be compared with those of Frithiof and Ingebore; and the description of Ingebore's marriage with King Ring, with that of Lucy Ashton, in the bride of Lammermoor. In Axel, another poem of the author's, whose only fault is its brevity, the celebrated lines from the siege of Corinth, beginning,

There is a light cloud by the moon, &c.

are imitated. It must, however, be remembered that, to Swedish readers, all that Tegnér wrote was as novel as it is beautiful.

Note 21, page 56, line 24.

Ragnarok : the last day. See note 40.

Note 22, page 65, line 2.

*" As Valas was, when Odin broke her sleep,
In that strange story of the pilgrim king."*

Vala, a Sibyll, or prophetess. The story of the pilgrim, or

traveller king, who was Odin, is the one which is so finely rendered by Gray, beginning,

Uprose the king of men with speed.

Vegtamsquida, is the Eddaic song, wherein it is found.

Note 23, page 65, line 20.

Fafnersbane, means slayer of Fafner. Fafner murdered his father, Heidmar, in order to make himself master of his wealth, and changed himself into a dragon, in order to guard it. Sigurd slew him, and was named Fafnersbane, from his exploit. The story of this Sigurd forms an important portion of the historical part of the Edda.

Note 24, page 72, line 6.

"In the wild waters of our agony."

*Many a green isle needs must be,
In the deep wide sea of misery—
Other flowering isles must lie,
In the sea of life and agony.*

SHELLY, Lines written amongst the Euganean hills.

For unacknowledged expressions (not ideas) taken from English authors, the translator, and not the original author, stands responsible; and phrases, for which he has drawn upon his memory, rather than his imagination, will be found to be in no wise uncommon. An expression that seems ready made for a ready-made idea, is generally rejected only for a worse one, and that at the reader's expense. Such an expression, however,

adopted in an original work, would be downright plagiarism, as in that case it also suggests the idea which it conveys, and this, perhaps, would have never been hit upon otherwise. Thus then, happy expressions of another man's coinage, may be used in a translation, to a degree which in an original work would be inadmissible. The lines

*Battle rears its helm,
And stamps its foot to shake King Helges realm.*

are due to Lord Byron's line

Red battle stamps his foot, and nations feel the shock.

CHILDE HAROLD.

This by way of illustration. To proclaim at once, that, wherever an earlier writer and yourself have a sentence in common, you are the borrower, and your elder the lender, is better than the pedantry of ostentatious acknowledgments; to say nothing of the accumulation of notes, and the very slight knowledge you presuppose your reader to be possessed of.

Note 25, page 94, line 18.

The Vikings, or sea-kings of the North, were either subject to, or capable of, working themselves into a kind of supernatural temporary phrenzy. This they called the Berserks-gang, and those who were subject to it, Berserks. They stripped themselves of their armour, and were more like wolves, or mad dogs, than men; they gnawed their shields; were strong as bears; slaughtered whatsoever they met, and were insensible to sword or flame. Ynglinga-Saga, c. 6. They vented their rage on inanimate objects. Hervara-Saga.

p. 14. Whilst they were under the Berserk, madness, their friends kept them down with their shields, until their fury left them. Canto XIX. Such a frenzy is represented on the stage, in a Danish play, of which I forget the title. Sir W. Scott's Harold the Dauntless is a Berserk.

Note 26, page 105, line 9.

Agirs daughters, the waves. Rana, who is often mentioned in the poem, is the goddess of shipwrecks.

Note 27, page 108, line 18.

An early northern king, named Erik, instituted a custom of new kings making a circuit of their dominions. This was called the Eriksgata.

Note 28, page 115, line 6.

Balders fire. See Note 13.

Note 29, page 128, line 4.

Vikingabalk, means the code of the Viking, or corsair chieftain. The following injunctions are thoroughly in the old Scandinavian spirit; indeed they are taken from the *Saga af Haif ok Halfs-rekkum*, c. 10.

Note 30, page 128, line 12.

A dagger will arm thee as well."

This line, which more than equals the spirit of the original, is the Rev. Mr. Strong's.

Note 31, page 139, line 4.

To split a man from the neck to the loins, and draw out his lungs from behind, was called *Carving the Blood-Eagle*; and so the Norwegian Vikings used to revenge themselves on their enemies.

Note 32, page 149, line 12.

Sleipner, Odin's horse.

Note 33, page 163, line 15.

See Note 15.

Note 34, page 165, line 18.

Windet zum Kranze die goldenen Aehren,
Flechtet auch blaue Cyanen hinein.

Schiller; das Eleusinische Fest.

Note 35, page 166, line 13.

See Note 25.

Note 36, page 167, line 6.

The river windeth at its own sweet will.

WORDSWORTH.

Note 37, page 177, line 9.

See for the Adventures of Brynhilda, at the tomb of Angantyr, and for a description of the sword Tyrting, the Hervara-Saga, pp. 10, and 56.

Note 38, page 179, line 1.

Breidablick; Balders mansion, see Note 13.

Note 39, page 179, line 16.

Urda was the destiny of past, Skulda, of future time. With their sister Verandi, the destiny of present time, they sat beneath the tree of time, over the fountain of experience, *i. e.* Mimers well.

Note 40, page 185, line 11.

In Note 13, on Canto III., I observed that the Scandinavian mythology was capable of being spiritualized; Balder, for instance, being taken as the Sun, and the Sun for mental light. In the speech, which is now before us, of Balders priest, this spiritualization is carried to its utmost. The Eddaic belief is, if I may use the term, Christianized.

Ragnaroka, is the twilight of the Gods. The conflict between the powers of Good and Evil shall then take place on the steep of Vigrid; Loke, the Tempter, shall be unbound; the wolf, Fenris, shall devour the sun and moon; the Serpent of Earth shall poison the atmosphere; the ash, Yggdrasil, shall tremble; when even Thor, Odin, and Heimdall shall have yielded to the monster powers of Darkness, Surtur shall brandish his flaming sword from the empyrean (Muspelheim), and burn up the world. At this unhappy time, Evil alone shall be powerful.

*Bloody men shall sharpen steel,
Each against his brother;
Saddest sisters children lie,
Slaughtered by each other.
Men shall weep when they do see,
Open-eyed Adultery.*

*A time for axes, time for shields,
For shields being cleft for sin;
A time for winds, a time for wolves,
Before the world sink in."*

Volusp. xli.

Yet shall all this ruin be but for a time. The Gods shall be reborn, the sun and stars shall be brighter, the earth greener than before, and just men shall dwell in Gimle, happy, and immortal.

This is the groundwork of the priests sermon. A lively writer, in one of the periodicals, remarks, that for Frithiof to have listened to it, must have been part of his punishment.

Note 41, page 186, line 8.

*It is the Heron of oblivion,
That broods over those who drink ;
She steals from a man his wit.
With the feathers of that fowl,
Was I fettered,
In the house of Gunlada.*

So says Odin in the thirteenth stanza of the Havamal.

Note 42, page 186, line 12.

See Grimnis—and Vafthrudnis—mal.

Note 43, page 195, line 17.

Yumala, was the chief Deity of the Finns and Laplanders. At the present time it is their name for the Supreme Deity. Our name for the Infernal Regions, taken from the Gothic word Hela, is a similar instance of the nomenclature of Paganism being transferred to Christianity.

ERRATA.

- Page 2, stanza 6, line 3, for *eagle*, read *eagles*.
— 4, — 5, — 3, after *knew*, insert *of*.
— 5, — 2, — 4, for *words*, read *woods*.
— 6, — 3, — 3, for *Ingebore*, read *Ingeborow*.
— 7, — 2, — 4, for *round*, read *around*.
— 12, — 3, — 4, for *bring*, read *brings*.
— 19, — 3, — 2, for *these befit*, read *best befits*.
— 25, and 26, for *Augurvadel*, read *Angurvadel*.
— 37, stanza 1, line 1, for *and*, read *a*.
— 56, — 1, — 3, after *feels*, insert a *comma*.
— 57, 63, and 73, for *Ingebore*, read *Ingbore*.
— 62, line 2, for *then*, read *their*.
— 67, — 15, for *give*, read *gives*.
— 68, — 19, for *then*, read *there*.

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